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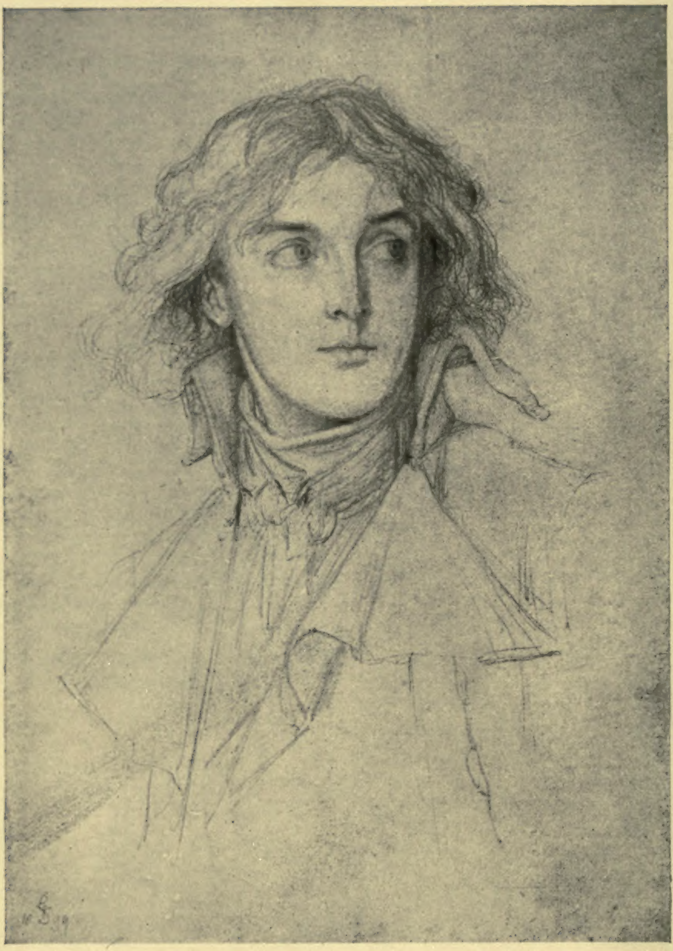

Sidney Carton

From an Etching by the Duchess of Rutland

Martin Harvey

Some Pages of his Life

By

George Edgar

With Twenty Illustrations

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A Foreword

Circumstances, alas, made it impossible for me to be present at one of the performances given by Martin Harvey in the course of his tour last year, when in each town which he visited he was good enough to devote one evening to *Pelléas et Mélisande*; and I know that I thus deprived myself of some of the good hours of my life.

I cannot recall without a profound emotion—the most intense, perhaps, of my whole career as a dramatic author—his first appearance in *Pelléas* many years ago in London, at the theatre then managed by that great and beautiful artist, Mrs Patrick Campbell. It was in the middle of the first act, when Harvey as Pelléas advanced slowly upon the scene, pale and marked by fate with mortal beauty, like a sort of pre-Renaissance Florentine Hamlet, that I heard in the very depths of my heart the secret but all-powerful cry of that mysterious voice which seems to come from a region beyond the human, and which only sounds at the great moments of existence. It was the unlooked-for but unmistakable soul of my dream, emerging suddenly from the most distant horizons of my thought, from the horizons most inaccessible to myself. There could be no doubt—although at first my eyes did not believe it—that the Pelléas of Harvey was incomparably more Pelléas than the Pelléas of my drama. It was this inevitably, by a sort of incontestable predestination; and I felt that if I had been obliged to complete or to interpret a gesture, or an attitude, or an inflection, or a thought of my hero, it would not have been to myself but to the Pelléas of Harvey that I should have put the question—so much did the soul of the grandson of Arkël seem, once for all, to have passed into him.

Since then I have seen, on various stages, more than one excellent Pelléas, and at Saint Wandrille an incomparable Mélisande. But I have never again experienced the emotion aroused in me by the unique Pelléas of that evening in London; for it was a marvellous adventure, such as occurs not twice in the lifetime of a poet.

MAETERLINCK.

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CHAPTER I

THE THEATRE-GOER AND MARTIN HARVEY—THE PLAYER FROM THE STALLS OR GALLERY—A WAITING CROWD—THE INFLUENCE OF GREAT ACTORS—THE PLAYER AS TEACHER OF BEAUTIFUL IDEAS—A FIRST INTERVIEW AND A NEW FRIENDSHIP—THE BEGINNING OF THESE REMINISCENCES

MANY years before I knew Martin Harvey, personally, I was as familiar with his name and work as are most theatre-goers in London and the provinces. The younger school of playgoers have grown up side by side with the Martin Harvey tradition, and to them he has always been a fixed star in the theatrical sky. That he was once a very young man; that he served his days, or nights, as walking gentleman; that he worked laboriously as an obscure actor, obtaining little or no recognition, outside the small world of the theatre employing him; that he emerged, quietly and without ostentation, and entered the ranks of leading and popular players—these are facts the younger school of playgoers barely remember and older playgoers are beginning to forget.

Martin Harvey to them means Martin Harvey, a polished, successful and distinguished actor manager, the head of a permanently established company of earnest players, a great figure in the gallery of stage heroes; a producer of fine plays, and the creator of beautiful theatrical effects. To thousands of people his annual season in London is an event, expected as a matter of course, and anticipated with increasing pleasure. The announcement made annually that "Martin Harvey and Company" will appear at any one of the leading theatres in the provinces is at once a social and artistic event in the routine of life in that city and its surroundings. To provincial audiences the actor has become, in one and the same person, a popular artist, a distinguished visitor and an old friend who reveals more charming phases of personality with the passing of the years. Martin Harvey's place on the stage is fixed in the minds of theatre-goers, and his appearance in London, the provinces and the great centres of population in America, are as much a part of the finer moments of theatre-going as were the seasons and tours of his earliest master, Sir Henry Irving, and the other great leaders of the English stage.

My knowledge of Martin Harvey was, for many years, the knowledge of the wide circle of friendly critics who throng the theatres to see his plays. From the front of the house, I had seen him in most of the plays he has produced. His fascinating character, Sidney Carton, had thrilled me dozens of times, and I had joined in many ovations, which were the marked features of every representation of the wonderful adaptation from "A Tale of Two Cities." Long before London became my home, Martin

Harvey was part of the sum total of pleasure I drew from the theatre. I had seen him in Liverpool, Manchester, Glasgow and Edinburgh, and at the theatres occupied during the seasons in town.

Once, in Liverpool, outside the Royal Court, I remember passing the stage door about the hour of eleven o'clock. It was a dark, wet night, and it looked darker and more cheerless in the shadow of the old theatre, when the lights were lowered, immediately after the audience had left. Across the way, St George's Hall loomed dourly in the mist. Lime Street was clanging with traffic, and crowds of people hurried towards trains and trams, eager to reach their homes after evening pleasures. But outside the theatre, in the little dark side street, a crowd of perhaps a hundred people waited. They consisted of women and men of many classes. The lady in her furs and the factory worker in rusty black and shabby hat, stood side by side. I asked a policeman why this crowd had collected—what drew them there to wait so patiently in the rain. He considered his explanation quite sufficing.

"They've been to see *Hamlet*," he said, "and are waiting for him and Ophelia." The policeman smiled as he spoke. He took it for granted I should know the Hamlet of the night was Martin Harvey, and that Miss de Silva was the fair Ophelia. The crowd were waiting to see Hamlet without his sable robes, and Ophelia freed from the haunting, appealing disorder which had shadowed her mind.

I remember thinking, as I walked on after waiting with the crowd to pay a tribute to the departing actor, of the extent of the influence a popular player must wield and the mysterious hold it must have on the minds of many thousands of people. What an impulse the actor's art can give, if his aim be high; what an insidious evil it may become if such power of suggestion happen to be basely used! Night after night, a man goes to the theatre through a modest stage door, and during each evening he holds a crowded audience in his hands, visualises hundreds of ideas for each eager pair of eyes; pours a world of suggestion into every receptive brain. An audience is composed of many grades of society and drawn from every type of city. Thus, one week, Martin Harvey may be appealing to the public of Edinburgh, steeped in literary traditions; the next week he may be influencing audiences drawn from the district of Manchester, the grim fastness of the cotton trade; a third week may find him holding the attention of an eager crowd of pleasure-seekers gathered together in an attempt to grasp something of the joy of life, during a brief period of freedom spent at a seaside resort. Night after night, year after year, the actor goes his rounds, influencing these diversely composed audiences. Each year, if his influence be an increasing one, he tightens his hold upon the imaginations of countless people—people whom he can never know and can only see as blurred patches in the galleries of dimly lit theatres.

This, surely, is the real meaning of the actor, and the fascination of the actor's art to the observer must ever be the extent and character of his influence. As I walked along the Liverpool street that night, I pictured Martin Harvey's influence. To-night, acting on the minds of thousands of people, he is the ill-fated Sidney Carton, privileged to visualise for his audience the penalties awaiting misspent powers and to hold out the hope there is for the most despairing—the hope of striking away the chains of habit and rising to heroic heights of self-renunciation. To-morrow he is Hamlet, the greatest of all teachers, mirroring not one but all the philosophies of life and conveying profound truths with every uttered line. Again, he is Pelleas, the tender young spirit of Maeterlinck's poetic conception of the mystery of life; the centre of a world haunted with beauty—the beauty of exquisite ideas set in an atmosphere which might have been stolen from dreamland by an eclectic visionary. The privilege of playing Pelleas in Sheffield, Manchester or Birmingham, where life is hard and factful, and surroundings are often ugly, can only happen to few men. To carry such a work of art to the people is to become the high priest of beauty—nay, its very passionate apostle—and the service rendered cannot be measured in words.

Thinking this, it followed naturally I should ask what manner of man wields such an influence, how does he come about, what are his aims and ambitions, and, last, what might be his attitude to the work he does—work which a great public has learned to love. These are questions every theatre-goer who comes under the spell of a great actor sooner or later asks himself, nor does vulgar curiosity prompt him to do so. The actor appeals almost entirely by his personality, and the interest of the public must always tend towards an effort, conscious or unconscious, to visualise that personality. I found myself thinking how much I would like to know a great actor from the beginning; from childhood to the adolescent age, when ambition began to stir; through the years of early effort and development; to the time first of promise and then of fulfilment. There are few such studies of a man of parts in the English language, and none known to me, dealing with one of the most fascinating of all personalities —the actor. From desiring such a study to desiring to attempt one was not a far cry. I caught myself thinking of what might be done in presenting Martin Harvey, the man behind his work, to his public of admirers, and in that moment this book may be said to have been born.

I am afraid I did not realise this suggestion then. As a matter of fact, I did not know Martin Harvey, nor, at that time, was there any prospect of increasing my knowledge of him, except by way of the box office as a theatre-goer. But time plays strange tricks, and the unlikely thing of yesterday can easily become the possibility of to-morrow. The years went by, and I had almost forgotten this record of my thoughts on seeing Martin Harvey leave the theatre in Liverpool, when memory was stirred again by the unlikely thing becoming a

Martin Harvey

A Portrait Study by H. Waite Sanderson

possibility. I found myself one night passing through the Lyceum Theatre stage door, an entrance many great players have used, and through the good offices of a friend, known to both of us, my introduction to the actor was completed. The Sidney Carton I had seen on the stage was sitting before me in the dressing-room, cordially greeting me with something of the extravagant gesture of the character he had revealed on the stage remaining in his manner. The meeting was of the kind one does not readily forget. It was a picture so many people know—Sidney Carton the reckless, clad in the great fawn coat, with the furred hat cast aside; the pale, dissipated face looking out from under its crown of disordered hair; the musical cadence of a voice full of charm and sympathy; and the glowing eyes, accentuated by the pallid make-up, reading me, as a new-comer, much as Sidney Carton tries to read the characters in the play. The actor in his great creation was before me, the atmosphere of the character still about him, and only half of the allotted course of the evening had been run. My memory of Liverpool rushed back to me—I had been interested in the man behind the mask, and here before me was the man with the player's mask still between us.

Many weeks and months slipped away before the project of writing this book took shape. In that period, I often passed through the stage door of the old Lyceum, and as time went on the mask of the player was more frequently laid aside.

A casual acquaintance ripened into a friendship sufficiently familiar to make the project of a book explaining Martin Harvey to his great public of admirers, quite feasible.

One night I put the matter to the actor in his dressing-room. "Why should I not write your life story?" I asked. He laughed, and there is an infectious note in Martin Harvey's laughter. "Why should you?" he asked, evidently considering the phrase a complete answer. I put the selfish reason first. "Because I want to make the book," I urged. "Is that quite a sufficient reason?" the actor asked. "I could hardly encourage you to waste months in writing a book no one will care to read." I laughed in my turn. "That is my case," I said; "if I can get you into a book, I consider as many people will want to read it as there are people who crowd the theatres to see you." For a moment Sidney Carton—Mr Harvey was Sidney Carton on this particular evening—looked thoughtful. I had advanced the one claim likely to be considerable in his mind. The public and their claim upon him are Martin Harvey's first considerations. "My life," he said heartily, with a sweep of his arm; "why, it has hardly yet begun. Let me live a few years longer; let me add to the record of my work; let me develop a greater interest for the public. It will all be better for the prospects of your book." "I will take my chance with the public," was my answer, "if you will only co-operate in making the book reveal yourself."

The actor shook his head, and we left the matter there for some weeks.

In Liverpool, curiously enough the city in which I first saw Martin Harvey away from the stage, I returned to the subject with growing persistence. I had taken steps to prove his public were looking for the projected book, and in the end my wish prevailed. That is how I came to write these reminiscences of Martin Harvey, up to the moment of the stately production of *Œdipus Rex* at the Covent Garden Theatre. In attempting the task I have had the artistic co-operation of the subject of this book; his charming wife, Miss de Silva, who has been by the actor's side throughout the whole of his working life, and is never happier than when she is furthering his ambitions; the members of their interesting family, and many friends, professional and social, who have known Martin Harvey from childhood and at different periods of his professional career. With their assistance I hope to give in a form acceptable to admirers who exist by the thousand, throughout the English-speaking world, a series of pictures of Martin Harvey, the actor; nor shall I be satisfied if, when the task is ended, I have failed to reveal the man behind a many-sided personality which has stimulated, encouraged, helped and consoled many playgoers by the exercise of a delightful art.

CHAPTER II

A LIFE OF REHEARSALS—MRS HARVEY'S IDEA—THE PUBLIC AND THE ACTOR—FOUR CHARACTER READINGS—MARTIN HARVEY AS BUSINESS MAN, PRODUCER, AND ACTOR—THE END OF A BUSY DAY—A PLEASANT SUPPER-PARTY—A CHAT OVER THE LAST PIPE

"If I were writing Mr Harvey's life," said Mrs Harvey to the writer, one day this year, "I think I should begin with a chapter on rehearsals."

"Yes," after a few seconds' pause; "yes, I should certainly open with a chapter on rehearsals."

"And after?" I suggested, with increasing interest.

"Why, after I should write more chapters on rehearsals—many more."

"You would be half-way through the book before you had completed your treatment of the one subject," I suggested.

"Yes, that's the humour of it," said Mrs Harvey—"half-way through the book I should still be writing about rehearsals."

"And what would you make of the concluding chapters?" I asked, curiously.

"Why," said Mrs Harvey, after another thoughtful interval, "I think I should provide more chapters on rehearsals, until I reached the end of the work."

"Would you consider that a good life?" I asked.

"If truth is good—yes. Our life is a matter of rehearsals—rehearsals, further rehearsals, and still more rehearsals," Mrs Harvey concluded with a very positive inclination of her head.

There are people who have quaint notions of the actor and his ways of life, private and professional. If he be popular, he is supposed to appear by day as a butterfly of fortune, flitting about the sunnier and lighter places of life with very little more purpose than the butterfly shows in its beautiful, fluttering progress. By night, the public see the actor going to the theatre to perform two hours of delightful toil—toil which they suppose makes but little demand on the artist and is sugar-coated with salvos of delightful applause and rounded off by a great ovation when the curtain finally falls. After the end of the evening's work, the actor has still a few delightful hours left in his day. He joins a gay supper-party, is its life and soul, and charms another audience by the exercise of his lighter social gifts. This is a popular picture of the actor's life, and so pleasant does it seem to the people who do not know, that to dispel the illusion is akin to breaking a butterfly on the wheel. It is no truer picture of the actor who has commanded success than the popular belief that all artists wear velveteen jackets and live in sumptuous studios; or that all literary workers affect long hair and draw sustenance chiefly from successive pipes of tobacco.

To know Mr Harvey casually is to be obsessed by the responsibilities of an actor's life. To watch his career at first hand is to incline to Mrs Harvey's summary of the routine of the years. Rehearsals, incessant rehearsals, loom very large, and seem to eat up whole days in every week.

To the world, four different men are wrapped up in the personality one comes to know as Martin Harvey, and under varying circumstances these four phases of his character are shown to those who meet him intimately, or through association with his work.

There is the man who rises as regularly as any humble worker checked by a factory clock. At the same hour each morning, Mr Harvey appears without fail, ready for the day's work and looking strangely fit to accomplish it. Imagine a slightly built man of average height. The familiar face known to many playgoers bears, on closer inspection, a faint flush that indicates perfect physical health, although the general impression tends towards the ethereal. The strangely magnetic eyes, glowing bright and clear, hold the quality of clear-sighted keenness one sometimes admires in the appearance of the more courageous birds. The carriage of the body is quick, decisive and sure—it has the quality of control to be found in the movements of the fencing expert. A first glance at Mr Harvey reveals a man who has great interests in life and is singularly quick to observe things going on around him. One gets also a glimpse of an intensely sympathetic nature, ever ready to respond to the conditions of the moment. More remarkable still is the range of vision he discovers and the constant power he displays of passing events in which he is interested through a process of very rapid judgment. One may add to this impression the fact that Mr Harvey is a man of fastidious tastes. The very clothes he wears, though they never obtrusively follow the fashion plates, are singularly well chosen. While in no sense apeing the man of fashion, you would say Mr Harvey is a well-dressed man. In the same breath you would also add he will never secure the effect produced at the sacrifice of his personal freedom or comfort. These are thoughts or impressions anyone may gather, on first seeing Mr Harvey, and the judgment passed would be no more than superficial. Behind the outward seeming of the man Mr Harvey displays to the world, lives a baffling, charming, and sometimes elusive, personality. A delightful companion, clever in the exercise of social gifts, polished, eclectic, he is not an easy man to know.

Still pursuing our subject superficially, a share in Mr Harvey's routine will very rapidly complicate a first impression. The different but familiar phases of Martin Harvey begin to appear. There is a man in his make-up with the logical mind one finds operating in the realm of successful commerce. It is not the mind which grasps and gropes for money, but rather the mind with the will to do and the knowledge of how to do that which it wills. An actor manager, with a company of seventy players; a man always engaged on new projects which run into large expenditures, must have the organising and business faculty to a marked extent or he is lost. Useless to talk of the careless, butterfly life of the artist when confronted with the problems of the actor manager. There is the theatre to be kept open; there are men and women whose work has to be directed and whose needs, in the form of salaries, have to be met; there are plays to read and judge; there are inevitable problems arising out of the creation of stage effects—problems concerning the scene painter, the electrician, the costumier and the railway contractor. There is a business side to the life of an actor manager, and he must know the prosaic details. Even though the executive work may be delegated, the directing, understanding and controlling brain must be there.

It is odd to see Mr Harvey, whose work before the public is of the stuff that dreams are made, in the rôle of man of affairs. Each of his days brings along a heavy correspondence; many problems arise and have to be settled immediately; there are conferences with stage manager, business manager, musical director and secretary, interviews with strangers who have legitimate claims upon his attention and others who are merely bent on wasting his time. With rapid decision, and a ready perception of the necessities of the machine on which his artistic life revolves, Martin Harvey patiently strives through the hours which he must spend daily as an organiser. Part of the secret of his success is that he gives to the dullest details of his business routine the concentration brought to bear on the artistic phases of the work he loves the most. One can see how carefully he watches the hours devoted to necessary routine, fearful lest they shall encroach on his jealously hoarded time; how eagerly he appreciates the completion of the task, and rises from it in the manner of the eagle slipping the wires of the cage binding it to earth. The necessary work of the business day over, one of those striking changes of personality immediately occurs—Martin Harvey has become another man.

He is now liberated for the cares of the theatre—the world in which he lives. The rest of the day in which he is not playing is given over to preparation for playing. To-day it may be a rehearsal—long hours of exacting preparation in which all the members of the company take part. In this phase of his work, another side of Mr Harvey's life reveals itself—the leader of men, the connoisseur of the craft of the stage, the student of beautiful effects and the various ways of producing them. The preparation of a play is at once a delight and a drudgery to the artist. Mr Harvey, as producer, is tireless in the attention he gives to every detail. The stumbling actor, playing a part without seeing its possibilities, repeating a line without appreciating its significance, is promptly arrested in his course. "Once more, my boy; once more." That once more means a more painstaking attempt to get the right effect, and perhaps results in failure. "Not a bit like it," the actor manager will say, in his clear, ringing, confident voice. In a moment, the neatly clad figure on the stage, without hesitation, will illustrate the conception he has formed of the way the part should be played. Without costume, make-up or preliminary thought, his face will assume the expression, his body the right pose, and his voice the one possible inflection to bring out the real meaning of the lines. It is a lesson, a valued lesson, in the art or craft of acting. The uncertain actor or actress has the effect desired produced in a spontaneous object-lesson, and the reading of the part impresses at once.

So drags along a rehearsal, and not a part or incident of the play—even down to the walk of a super—escapes the actor's vigilant attention. In the course of an afternoon, he will give a hundred object-lessons in the art of acting, and the company look on, amazed not only at his capacity to produce the exact effect at a moment's notice, but at the range of observation such a capacity implies. Incidentally, there are details of costume to consider, the grouping of people for various effects, the lighting of the stage, the production of scenic effects. To inspire a company with enthusiasm and unity of purpose is a wearing business, far away from the public's conception of the ease, beauty and freedom of the artist's life. Two hours of such work would exhaust the enthusiasm of a vigorous man, but Mr Harvey can go on for hours, growing more enthusiastic wth the passing of time. At the end of the longest rehearsal, he leaves the theatre with the quick step, the assured poise, the mental vigour and the contagious enthusiasm which he brought to it. He does not seem to tire.

An hour later, after an early evening meal, another Martin Harvey emerges—the actor. The business man and the craftsman have done their work. The machinery is running easily and every part has been overhauled. The patient drudgery of the day is forgotten. Forth from his home, or temporary residence, the artist goes to the evening task of expressing himself. A slight figure of a man, the ethereal note in his physical make-up growing more accentuated, the glowing intensity of the wonderful eyes less responsive to external objects, he is more silent than at any moment of his day. Martin Harvey is going to meet his public, and it is on the way to the theatre one realises just what is meant by this simple phrase to the artist who is ever behind the actor. He talks but little; seems glad to be aloof from the affairs of the busy world; is undoubtedly grateful for the quiet of his dressing-room. With a leisurely preparation begins one of those appearances which delight so many great audiences. The actor, as he takes on the appearance of the character, begins to live in the part he is to play. The concentration of the effort is enormous. And the odd phenomenon about a night in the theatre with Martin Harvey is that, no matter how often a part is played, the same patient, artistically affectionate care is given to the character in hand. Even to-day, when Sidney Carton has run his course and taught his stern lesson thousands of times, the character holds the actor so much in its grip that, if he speak between the intervals, there is something of the manner of Sidney Carton in his gesture and a lingering inflection of sadness in his voice. Painstaking to a degree that would make many an artist wince, Mr Harvey dreams every night of improving Sidney Carton, and of maturing his conception of the part. Perhaps this is why the charm of the romantic play never withers and why his hold on the audience never weakens. It accounts for the fact that Mr Harvey's Hamlet, coming at an unfortunate moment and treated lightly by the critics, is now being spoken of by theatre-goers as the most interesting and convincing reading of the Prince of Denmark ever placed before them. The artist in Martin Harvey is never satisfied. The comparative failure becomes a creation to be nursed, polished, refined and patiently developed, until the character develops both life and charm and the quality of carrying conviction which only great art can achieve. Mr Harvey in the theatre shows the most impressive phase of his character—the artist with exquisite sensibility striving always after more perfect methods of expression.

One last phase of Martin Harvey's day remains. The work of the theatre over—a new man emerges. If you have the privilege of entering into his life and accompanying him home, you will find a different man revealing himself in the place of the moody, thoughtful, silent actor who set out for the theatre, four hours before. A pleasant supper in the family circle ends Mr Harvey's day. Usually the actor sees few people after his day's work is done. Supper at home may consist of the members of his intimate family circle. Besides Mr Harvey there will be Mrs Harvey, still with unquenchable enthusiasm for her art rippling in her speech after the night's work; Miss Harvey, a cousin who travels and acts with the company, and Mr J. Kurkamp, a great blonde American of astonishing physique, who has been everywhere and done everything, and now travels as stage director with "Martin Harvey and Company, including Miss de Silva," wherever they appear, and is a permanent member of the family circle. Sometimes this last gathering of the family may include Miss Muriel Harvey, or Mr Harvey's son, now entering upon his education at one of the public schools. Maybe the members of the little family have brought one or two of their friends to this reunion at the end of the day. In such surroundings one sees the lovable side of Mr Harvey.

A courteous host, urbane, polished, cosmopolitan; a ready talker using beautiful English as carefully as if he were speaking the words to the public; a good listener, singularly free from affectation and with wonderful self-possession and repose—these are qualities Martin Harvey reveals in his home. Devoted to his wife and family circle; concerned about and deeply interested in even the most trivial detail in the round of his home life, one sees behind his lightest word evidence of pride in his intimate surroundings and warm, yet thoughtful, appreciation of the domestic interests which revolve round him. The last gathering in Mr Harvey's day is simple, homely, genial and high-spirited. He has time to talk and to listen. The record of the doings of the various members of the family circle is once more recounted; the good story is told, and those little intimate revelations which are so much a part of the charm of English family life begin to creep out. Perhaps in the last half-hour before your host leaves you for the night, he may speak a little of himself, his ambitions and his achievements. Martin Harvey does this but seldom—and the curtain usually drops just as you glimpse one aspect of his personality, and would see more. Thus one may see the actor at the end of his day, and it is a memory that lingers.

One might say these brief pictures of Mr Harvey, taken in the course of a typical day, represent the Martin Harvey people know. I think those who know him best will agree there is one more side to his personality which people do not know. There is a Martin Harvey who sits alone at the end of the day after everyone has retired—Martin Harvey with a pipe, enjoying an hour of solitude in his full life. This last hour is perhaps the keynote to his character. Behind the work of the day and the social side of his life, in the theatre, at home, on the stage, in the street, there runs an undercurrent of aloofness. Although his life is crowded with friends, incidents, absorbing interests and constant change of setting, one begins to realise that Martin Harvey is a very lonely man. He inspires devotion, affection, respect and admiration wherever he goes, but he has few intimate friends. This quality is not coldness nor hardness of character, dourness nor discontent, but rather a proud, eclectic reserve, and there is something wistful and appealing about it. No one can respond with more charm or warmth to the most casual greeting, but withal through the crowded thoroughfares of life Martin Harvey is of the race of men who pass onwards alone.

CHAPTER III

A SIDELIGHT ON PERSONALITY—AN ALOOF ATTITUDE TO LIFE—A BUSY ROUND—MARTIN HARVEY'S ADMIRATION FOR CRAFTSMEN—MR KURKAMP ON HOLIDAYS—THE ACTOR AND HIS ART—THE IMPORTANCE OF PHYSICAL ATTRIBUTES—MARTIN HARVEY'S SELF-CONTROL—ACTING AS A PRIMROSE PATH TO PROSPERITY—A MYTH EXPLODED

In the last chapter I attempted to give a few pictures of Martin Harvey as he appears during the bewildering period of early acquaintance. It is quite easy to give personal impressions of a man you do not know. Right or wrong, if you go no deeper, you are not able to test whether they are true or no, and people who know less of the subject than yourself have to accept your estimate without challenging it at all. Closer knowledge of Mr Harvey reveals many surprises, and the conviction grows that there are so many sides to his personality as to make him almost unknowable.

What can be done in the direction of greater familiarity is to live side by side with the actor, to hear him talk; better still to watch him carefully when he is talking and to speak about him with others. By observing closely you may revise the first impression with some approach to accuracy, but not necessarily to finality.

What begins to emerge is the conviction that under the different fronts the actor turns to the world is an entirely contradictory personality. I have conveyed an idea of Mr Harvey as a polished man of the world; as an astute business man; as a producer of plays, remorseless in his handling of those who serve under his banner, in his desire to obtain their best; and of an actor with powers of concentration which seem to have no thought that is not concerned with the character he is playing. But when one knows him better, these four or five men, who seem superficially the correct glimpses of his character, begin to fade, and there emerges another man, totally different and more difficult to appreciate or understand.

I was talking to Mrs Harvey one day, as we sat alone, gazing out of the window of a hotel overlooking the noble architecture in St George's Square, Liverpool.

" What in your opinion is the key to Mr Harvey's personality ? " I asked.

She thought a while, and her answer was somewhat unexpected.

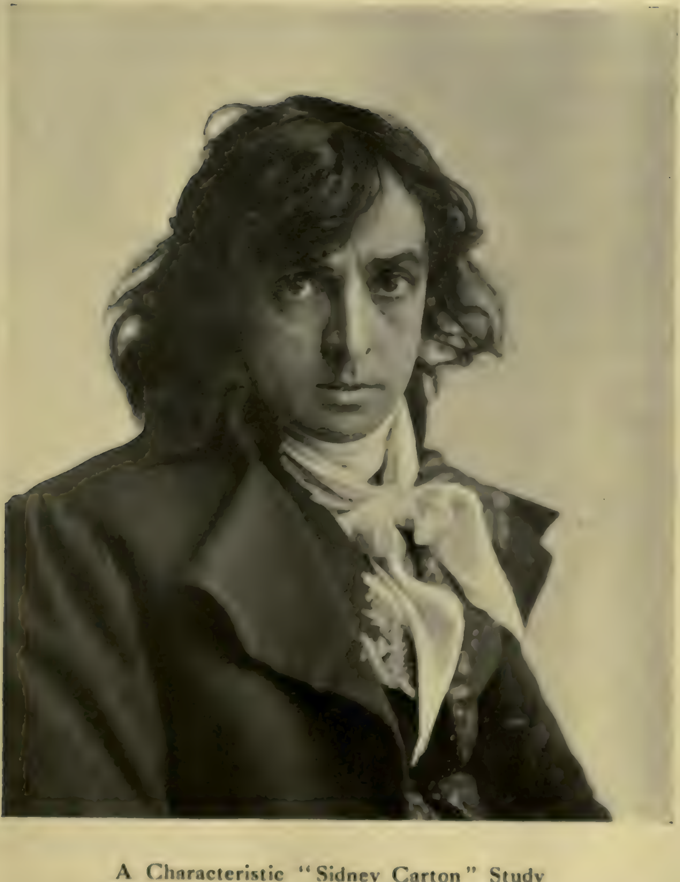
" I think," said Mrs Harvey, " whatever attempt is made to make my husband's character intelligible to the public should insist on his wonderful simplicity and single-mindedness."

It happened to be a view which I had considered.

" I do not think anyone can be with him long without noticing it," Mrs Harvey continued. " The world and its affairs go past Mr Harvey. The one subject which interests him, holds his attention and absorbs his thought, is his art and the other arts associated with it. The one ambition he holds, the ideal up to which he lives, is to increase his mastery of that art. He has the patience over detail always found in the great artist. He loves colour and form, not as a glib method of emphasising his taste and impressing other people, but for themselves alone. One thing that really excites his interest is good work. He will grow excited over any work of the craftsman—any beautiful object made by human hands is a thing he almosts worships. Secretly, it is the work of the craftsman he loves the most. He would have been a painter had he followed his desire, and even to-day his greatest pleasure lies in the examination of pictures. Second to that is the delight he takes in beautiful craftsmanship—the handiwork of the artist in wood, or metal, or fabrics. For instance, exquisite needlework will delight him for hours at a time."

"But these are not evidences of simplicity," I suggested.

"No," Mrs Harvey replied. "But if you will note what he thinks by what he says, and what he likes by what he does, you will soon realise how deeply his love of art, particularly the art of cleverly made objects, implies a simplicity of life. He is so occupied with his work and—when he is free—with the admiration of the beautiful things men write or paint, carve or model, that he sees but little of any other side of life at all. Even now my husband



A Characteristic "Sidney Carton" Study

Photograph by the London Stereoscopic Company

is oddly aloof from what so many people consider the real matters of importance in the world, and curiously ignorant of things that happen in it. He has no time for social life, for instance. This is our life—playing, rehearsing and preparing for both, as you see it. When there are moments of leisure, a visit to a gallery or a brief tour of centres where the things Mr Harvey admires are found, are all he demands from existence."

That certainly is the life led by Mr Harvey. Playing, preparing plays or snatching an hour to visit a gallery, a picture show or the rooms of a craftsman or connoisseur comprise his day's routine from one year's end to another. And the truth is as Mrs Harvey states—his worldly knowledge is not much greater than that possessed by the average child. Although one may consider Mr Harvey a man of the world—using the old expression in its best sense—he is not of it. The social life of calls and visits, dinner-parties, gossip at the club, does not appeal to him. Sport, which implies long days at the butts, on the racecourse, or with rod and line by the stream, holds no charm for the actor. The newspapers, with their odd mixture of politics, world wrangles, sensational news, and their record of the trivial and immaterial, are barely glanced at daily, and do not recur in his speech. His one intimate friend is a well-known sculptor, and the holiday they take together represents the only leisure the actor secures from his year's work. Mr Kurkamp, his stage director, gives an interesting sidelight on this side of his character.

"Mr Harvey," said Mr Kurkamp, who has travelled with him everywhere, "after a heavy season, or a long tour, will begin to mention his holidays. Perhaps his tireless spirit flags, though he is unconscious of it. He will say: 'This year I must have a clear two months for holidays and recreation—I must really find time to go away properly and get a complete change of outlook!' Then he will give instructions for two months to be reserved out of the year. I know what that means. We get him away, and for two weeks we hear enthusiastic reports of his progress from place to place. Then questions begin to come about the work of preparing for the new play we may have in hand, and from question after question to dissatisfaction with the progress reported is but a short step. We expect to see him back at the end of the month—eager for work. And it usually happens that way. Mr Harvey is not the sort of man to take holidays. He soon grows restive when away from his work."

This absorption in his work—in the art of acting—certainly gives one the key to the man. Talk to him of any phase of the art of the theatre and you have his immediate, glowing attention and the quality of his interest rings in his voice, animates his eyes, gives force to every gesture. And when you look back upon a long series of intimate talks with him, you note, with some surprise, how completely you have been withdrawn from life as it is lived by the ordinary man and brought into a world where beauty of ideas, finished workmanship, devotion to a high ideal of art, only seem to count. I remember, during one of his tours, spending a week with Mr Harvey, almost constantly in touch with his personality. As I left for London after seeing him and his family off for Scotland, it struck me with a gasp of surprise how remote from my world—which happens to be Fleet Street and its interests—I had been. I could not have been taken more completely out of it had I lived in some remote corner of the country, cut off from railway communication. I had forgotten that outside of the hotel in which we stayed, and the theatres in which Mr Harvey played, there was a world at all. I was with a man whose sole concern was with the art of the theatre and the arts which make the theatre live—the writer, the painter, the designer of fine fabrics and costumes, and the smaller craftsman who enriches Martin Harvey's productions with his beautiful work. We passed in and out from hotel to theatre, and each day was so crowded that half-an-hour's drive about the Park, or a brief walk round the square in front of the hotel, were all we saw of the world outside. My knowledge of the life going on around us, and contact with it, was limited to half-an-hour spent in the smoke-room of the hotel, between the hours of midnight and one o'clock.

And this naturally leads to another interesting side of Mr Harvey's character. There are occasions when he ceases to be a man at all, but becomes a physical instrument of his art, even in his own eyes. I do not know whether I make my meaning clear, but I can best give the impression by recollecting the suggestive words which led to my noticing it.

"The actor," said Mr Harvey, in one of his frequent moments of enthusiasm for his art, "is the only creative artist who has not a means of expressing himself which might be called an implement of his work. Thus—the painter visualises his art permanently, with paint, brushes and canvas. The writer has his pen, and leaves a written record of his most productive moments. The sculptor has his modelling tools, and the record of his work is in the clay he moulds. The musician can make his work permanent, and it can be reproduced by any orchestra if the performers follow the printed sounds. But the actor has nothing but his personality, his physique, his appearance, with which to visualise to his hearers the soul of a man's work. Acting may be the expression of a man's soul, but its vehicle is a matter of flesh and blood—of brains, nerve and muscle."

Martin Harvey sees in his body the instrument of his art—it is what the paint and brushes are to a painter, the music score to the composer, the written word or the printed book to the writer. Once grasp this fact and one recognises that the exquisite note in Martin Harvey's personal appearance is not mere dandyism. The care he gives to his physique and personal appearance, impressive as they are to the beholder, is but the care a music lover will often show for a cherished violin. Mr Harvey schools himself to perfect his physical make-up and to maintain it, and, more important still, he is always aiming at a higher control. The power of the voice to give a shade of extra meaning by an inflection so subtle as to be scarcely perceptible; the glance of an eye or the movement of a muscle of the face to denote the thoughts passing in the mind behind; the art of gesture, which is largely the movement of the arms and hands; the carriage of the body, with its power to convey the atmosphere and the manner of a whole period—enter into Mr Harvey's conception of acting as a mere matter of flesh and blood. The ceaseless effort to improve and control every physical attribute has left its mark upon his personality. The years he has spent in cultivating one phase of the actor's art—his physical resources—mark him out from the race of ordinary men, by the sound of his voice, the unconscious personal grace betrayed by his movements and the attention he gives to such details as the spontaneous emphasis of a word of conversation by the appropriate gesture. The tendency of all who meet him to be impressed by his personal appearance, is their tribute to the art of a man who has trained his body and mind to express every mood and its corresponding action simultaneously. It is this carefully developed ability which gives something of the eclectic to the manner of Martin Harvey and perhaps accounts for his aloofness. He has cultivated a sense of studying the simplest things visible to the ordinary eye to a point where it cannot be taken up or cast aside with the make-up of the theatre. The result is somewhat overwhelming to the average man. It surrounds Mr Harvey with a finished, polished, exclusive atmosphere which suggests the man who demands the best from life and the people who live it; who knows the best and is conscious when it is being withheld. Nor is this quality one of snobbery, pretentiousness or affectation. The amazing fact is that it is natural. It is good taste expressed in terms of physical attributes, conserved, improved and directed just as a perfectly trained athlete applies exceptional physical strength.

I have entered into this estimate of Martin Harvey's character because I want to show in succeeding chapters what goes to the making of an actor. I suspect that if this book is read at all it will be by a younger generation who desire to know the steps taken by great actors to secure artistic development on the stage. Many young people who throng the stage doors of theatres as aspirants fail because of their mistaken idea of what is meant by a theatrical career. A careful review of the successful actor in the making ought either to warn such young people away or bring them forward much better equipped for the work they desire to do. Too often is it believed that the art of acting is easy work for people who imagine they are artistic. They believe the life of the player is a sort of primrose path to prosperity, free of the drudgery which bars the way to success in any other art. I have spent considerable time in trying to reflect the personality of

Mr Harvey because a moment's thought will show how laborious a path must be trodden before anything can be achieved in the direction of developing a similar personality. I have tried to show a man absorbed in his work and possessing a mind equipped with a catholic appreciation for the sister arts, which alone makes sympathetic acting possible. I have attempted to emphasise, side by side with this, the incessant care bestowed on the body as a physical instrument. This alone means years of conscious thought and direction; a self-control capable of eschewing every form of excess; a Spartan habit of mind in which few men or women would find happiness. Long before there is need to consider the soul of the artist, there is necessity to learn control of body and mind. It is the technique of acting. Even when this technique has been laboriously acquired there is something more—that elusive sense in man which is called genius. A student becomes a good actor by acquiring technique; but a great actor, never. The school one needs to attend will best be appreciated by following the remaining sections of this book, which are concerned with Mr Harvey's progress to the theatre and his actual record on the stage itself.

CHAPTER IV

FIRST APPEARANCE IN THE WORLD—SOME HARVEY ANCESTORS—WYVENHOE AND THE SMUGGLERS—THE HARVEYS AT WYVENHOE—THE VILLAGE TO-DAY—A PAINFUL EARLY MEMORY—A FAMILY MIGRATION—A HOUSE OF VAGUE TERROR AND AN EERIE GUEST—A LONELY BOY AND THE SAILORS' TAVERN—FAMILY RECOLLECTIONS—FIRST SCHOOLDAYS—A SAD END TO CHILDHOOD MEMORIES—MARTIN HARVEY VISITS HIS BIRTHPLACE—AN EMPTY HOUSE

I

For the earliest appearance of Martin Harvey on the stage of life itself, we must turn to Wyvenhoe, a village near Colchester, in Essex, which still holds a great part of the old-time charm of East Anglia against our modern tendency to change, to tear up and to pull down. In this sleepy village as it used to be in the days of the earlier Harveys, there are traces of the family for many generations. While it is not necessary to dig deeply for the roots of the genealogical tree, a kindly expert in this delightful field of research tells me the Harveys of Wyvenhoe were descended from an ancient Breton family, which settled in East Anglia at the time of the Conquest. A beautiful Druidic legend of Herouf or Hervé is still related by the shepherds of Carnac, the French village so rich in interest for its actual Druidical remains and associations. This legend represents the name of Harvey in its earliest form, and it is interesting to note, in passing, that the hero's mystic symbol, the trefoil, still adorning the shields of all the Harveys, commemorates their fabulous ancestor. In the seventh year of the reign of King John we find Osbert de Harvey as a prominent personage in the records of the counties of Suffolk and Essex. The elder line of his descendants is now represented by the Earl of Bristol. It is from the younger branch that Mr Harvey descends, through a long line of distinguished ancestors. Sir Nicholas Harvey was Gentleman of the Bedchamber to King Henry VIII. and John Harvey was Comptroller of the Household to the same monarch. Sir Thomas Harvey was another distinguished ancestor, who in his day was Knight Marshal to Queen Mary (Tudor). Several of Mr Harvey's ancestors took part with their kinsman, the gallant Lucas, at the defence of Colchester, while another Harvey was High Sheriff of Essex in the reign of Charles II. In Billingsgate Ward, in the year 1603, references are to be found to another ancestor—"Martin Harvey, of ye Middle Temple, sonne of Sir Francis Harvey, one of His Maïties Judges of ye Common Pleas." At the commencement of the seventeenth century, the family was to be found at Witham, and afterwards moved to Wyvenhoe, where, true to the tradition of their Celtic ancestors, they have for the past two centuries followed the call of the sea. The name of Martin, linked to the Harvey family by marriage, represents another fascinating chapter in genealogy. It is sufficient for our purposes to say that it comes from an ancient family of Saffron Walden, for generations famed for nautical exploits and daring deeds during the Napoleonic wars. Interesting to note, before we leave the subject, is the fact that the Martins still bear upon their coat-of-arms the blue and gold of the Chapel or Cope of St Martin of Tours, the colours of the Norman Conqueror's patron saint.

Leaving the remote Harveys, fascinating as they might be if our researches were extended, let us return to the life of a more modern Wyvenhoe. Wyvenhoe is a typical fishing village of the old school, built upon a creek which has a sinister or romantic reputation just as one may view it. Still redolent of the sea and the old salt, it has played its part in the dramatic adventures associated with the running of contraband, and many a good story is told in that district of the way the old smugglers, who crept in and out of the creek, matched their cunning against the keenness of the excise officers. Down to the last generation, the Harveys were of the sea, on both sides of the family, and if they did not adventure illicitly as many of the people of the coast did, they certainly took a hand in the great game of the smuggler by assisting to suppress it. A Martin lost his life while in charge of a Government vessel, in an encounter with smugglers on that coast.

The history of the modern Harveys, at Wyvenhoe, begins with Mr Harvey's grandfather, who founded a shipbuilding yard in that town, and the name of Martin borne by the actor appears in the family with the same generation. The father of Martin Harvey grew up to this business, which in its first days was but a small enterprise. Mr John Harvey, in due course, succeeded to full control of the enterprise, which soon grew to be a formidable undertaking. A man of strong individuality, with the courage of his convictions, under his direction the little shipbuilding firm flourished until it enjoyed a reputation second to no other enterprise of its time—the chief distinction of the yard being its great success in the designing and construction of racing yachts, the forerunners of the more elaborate craft we know to-day. Amongst the famous boats turned out of the Wyvenhoe yard, were the schooners, *Miranda* and *Sea Belle*, whose doings are historic in the annals of yachting.

John Harvey married Margaret Diana Mary, the eighth child of the Rev. David George Goyder (originally Gwydyr), the descendant of a well-known Welsh family, several members of which achieved distinction. It is a name known and reverenced by followers of Swedenborg to this day, and the members of the later generations of the family were all actively engaged in spreading the teachings of the Swedish seer and mystic. The later generations of the Harvey family adopted the same faith and the union of Mr Harvey's father and mother was no doubt brought about largely by the religious sympathies they held in common. In the religious atmosphere which grew about Swedenborg's teaching, Martin Harvey was brought up, one of a family of seven children, four of whom survive to-day. The blood of peoples drawn from Brittany, East Anglia and Wales flows in his veins. The conquerors from Normandy, with their love of adventure; the rough men of the coast, who held their own in turbulent, lawless Essex by force of character—the practical English element; the people of Wales, with their glowing warmth of feeling, their spontaneous appreciation of the mystical and the beautiful expressed in a wealth of legend, mingle in Martin Harvey. When one examines his family tree, it is not surprising to find the distinguished descendant of such forebears showing intense artistic sympathy and a love of superb craftsmanship, strangely combined with an executive capacity which makes it possible for him to carry out his artistic dreams in the world of the theatre.

II

The village of Wyvenhoe lies about five miles from the sea on the wide estuary of the Colne, and those who approach the coast of Essex from the North Sea expecting impressive scenery are doomed to disappointment. One misses the great white cliffs which tower upwards along the coast of Kent, between the mouth of the Thames and Dover, and even farther along the southern coast—the white walls of England so famous in our national songs.

The rugged beauty of the Cornish coast; the picturesque rock-girt shores of Yorkshire, between Flamborough Head and Scarborough; the delicate charm of some of the sea frontages of Northern Wales; the wonderful panorama to be viewed as one sails, in the early morning, through the Kyles of Bute to the mouth of the Clyde, all characteristic examples of the British coast, are perhaps more picturesque than anything to be found in the neighbourhood of Wyvenhoe.

It is a low-lying, marshy land, and in many of its aspects resembles the coast of Holland and the sandy wastes of Northern Germany. The water has eaten into the land in all sorts of unexpected ways and shaped the soft soil into a geographical fantasy. One finds there all manner of fantastic variations —wide river mouths, flat islands and creeks that wind in and out in the most confusing manner, and, at low tide, interminable stretches of mud. But though the district has none of the spectacular attractions which draw thousands to better-known beauty spots along the coast, in its quiet way it has a sober picturesqueness that appeals. It teems with interest to those who have an eye for the approaches to the sea in their more homelier aspects; while the student can create for himself, from the associations of the past, a very picturesque vein of romance. Such a flat district, with so many creeks and channels leading soon to the river mouth, must have been a positive invitation to marauders of the sea.

Early people who noticed its inviting weakness were the Romans, who, landing in these eastern lowlands, fought, conquered, built and settled there. Later came Saxon and Dane to make the surrounding country a cockpit as they fought out their tribal rivalries. Long after the pirates of the sea ceased to descend on England, having possessed it, the romance of the coast still continued. The inviting flat coast and the winding creeks, when they ceased to attract pirates from without, became equally convenient to the smuggling descendants of the same stock, and in days when the running of contraband was popular the low-lying mouth of the Colne had more than its share of adventure.

Sailing down the wide estuary of the Colne, and passing Brightlingsea and the island of Mersea, one finds the village of Wyvenhoe on the right bank, Fingrinhoe being on the opposite side. The features of the country around are the Essex Saltings, flat marshes intersected by innumerable arms of salt water, called "The Fleets." In such channels as these the smugglers took sanctuary, and once in the labyrinth they were entirely safe from the pursuing revenue cutter.

"I do not remember much of Wyvenhoe as a boy," Mr Harvey said to me one day, "because, as a matter of fact, I did not live there for very long periods at a time. I fancy I must have been delicate in my early childhood, for I was sent to school at a very tender age. My father, I learnt many years after, thought the marshy land, the damp, the mist and the east winds of this low-lying district were not good for us, and his desire was always to keep the children away from these dangers. My earliest recollections go back to the first house we lived in, a roomy place in a shipyard now no longer there. My first memory is rather a painful one. I recall sitting with my sister, each of us in a tall chair, and by some means I happened to topple mine over. The result was I fell into the fire and was, I believe, badly burnt. It is the obvious thing for me to say my first recollection of life burnt itself on my imagination," Mr Harvey added, with a quiet chuckle.

" Even now," he continued, in this the earliest of our reminiscent chats, " I can recreate those early days of my childhood. I have only to shut my eyes, and the first playground I had, the shipyard, with its many activities, comes back to me. I can see again the boats on the stocks, my father poring over his drawings in the designing-room, the men going and coming about their tasks, the bustle and activity which always seemed to be a part of the place. And so vividly does it all return that sometimes I can still smell the mingled odours from the tar, the ropes and the wood, blended with the breeze from across the saltings. Indeed, my childhood seems inseparably woven with sights and sounds related to the sea. The whole village of Wyvenhoe was connected with the sea in one way or another. Our shipbuilding company was perhaps the biggest employer of labour there, and, so far as I can search my recollections of the earliest days, the rest of the population was made up of picturesque, tarry old salts, fishermen and boatmen, who even in my time did a little smuggling, though it was then what the politicians might call a declining industry."

Very shortly after the appearance of Martin Harvey the family left the house in the shipyard and migrated to a residence known as Quay House. From all accounts, it was an unhappy move—and had a depressing effect on the whole family, particularly on Mrs Harvey, always delicate and highly strung, who was constantly obliged to leave home in search of health.

Miss Harvey describes Quay House as a rambling structure, somewhat gloomy and forbidding in character. It was full of weird stairways, queer passages and numerous doors, leading from one room to another, scarcely one of which was on a level with the other.

"It was the sort of house," Miss Harvey explained, "that constantly obsessed you with its dramatic possibilities. I think the atmosphere of mystery came largely from its construction. The house had been built on the go-as-you-please plan. First someone had knocked two houses into one. Then they had added one wing and another, and perhaps taken in an outhouse or a loft. The result was the unexpected always, particularly for children, who never seemed to be free from the obsession that something mysterious was going on behind the turn of a passage, or one of the innumerable closed and seldom opened doors."

"Yes," said Martin Harvey, seriously, looking into the fire as he spoke, as if he were making pictures of this early old house, "I think it coloured all our lives. On me the place created an impression I have never forgotten. I shall always remember how it all came back to me when I first opened Maeterlinck. He has touched qualities of emotion no one else has brought to the surface—the mysteries of terror, horror, nightmare and foreboding of vague dangers one cannot name. Looking back I see my early years as periods of dreadful nightmare, and even my waking moments were haunted with a sense of terror of I knew not what."

"But why?" I asked, as Mr Harvey broke off, and once more sought amongst the glowing coals for pictures of his early childhood.

"I cannot say," he said, "but there was the effect always with us, and my mother, who was an invalid, found it a nerve-racking experience, from which she had constantly to seek relief."

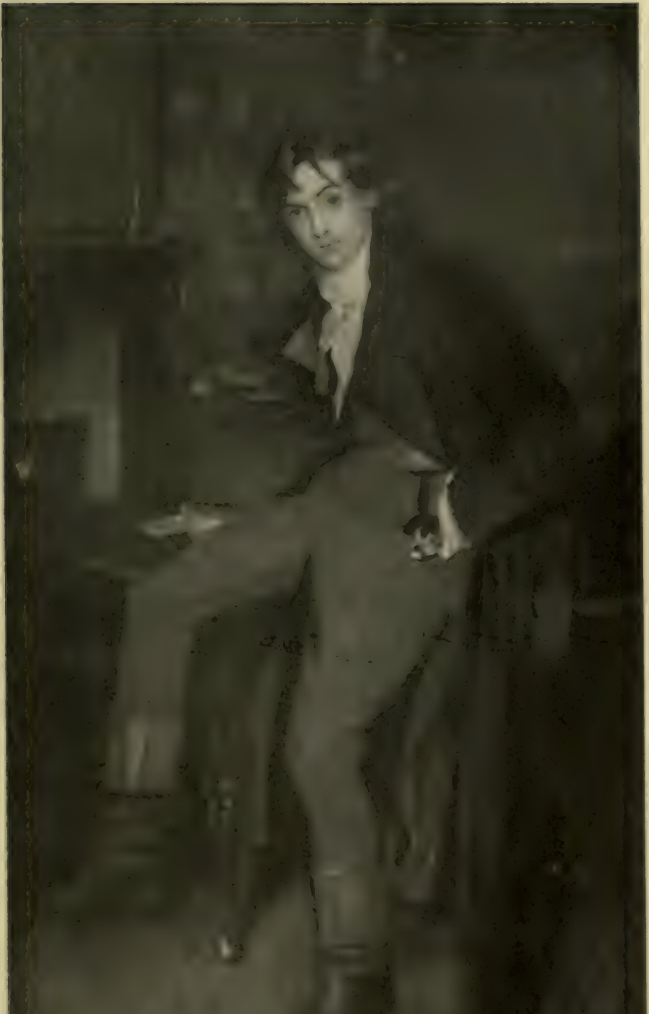
I pressed for some concrete reason for the state of terror Quay House seemed to have inflicted on this family of little people, mothered by a nervous invalid woman, and Mr Harvey told me this story.

"I remember one very characteristic influence at work in the old house and perhaps it may have been the centre from which our foolish but real terror spread. A servant of a former tenant of Quay

House committed suicide in one of the lofts. The story was known to the children and to myself, and was often in my thoughts. The poor woman had drowned herself in a cistern in a part of the house but rarely used. Now in my mind was always a haunting impulse to explore the loft and find that cistern. The difficulty lay in the fact that the door to the loft was never open, but, always, I had a persistent hankering to see behind it.

" I recall one day the awful adventure of finding that cistern, as it represented itself to me. I set out for the loft, by getting through a window on the top floor, climbing over the roof, and reaching a portion of the house I had never explored before. I got the door open with a great deal of effort, and at length found the very cistern, from which I ran back in terror although I had been irresistibly drawn to the adventure and could not refrain from going. I can still recall the horror of it all, the stealthiness with which I approached the deserted loft, the wild beating of my heart as I gazed on the prosaic cistern, the unreasoning expectation of tragedy haunting my mind."

Martin Harvey laughed as he told the story, and seated by the bright fire we all laughed with him, and the spell was broken. Still, whether it was the recollection of the horror of this period of his childhood, or merely the actor's love for the mysterious, obscure terrors Maeterlinck has so beautifully revealed, I do not know, but in telling this simple story he unconsciously created the same kind of



Martin Harvey as Sidney Carton

From a Painting by Harrington Mann. By permission of "The Era

atmosphere for his audience seated in the quiet room that Irving used to summon into the weirder passages of *The Bells*.

One last picture of this early home of Martin Harvey and we may leave it.

" I had a bedroom there," Mr Harvey explained, later in the same evening—a Sunday, when there were no calls from the theatre to interrupt his reminiscent vein. " It overlooked a narrow, dimly lit side street, and there was a taproom opposite. Lying abed in the dark, I could see the tavern and the lights within shining through the red curtains. Old salts used to go there a great deal, and at night it was uproarious with their talk and laughter. I could hear the old fellows roaring wicked sea songs, and the noise they made would go on until well-nigh midnight. Often I could not sleep through some imagined terror, and I used to lie awake listening to the roaring choruses. I drew a strange sense of company from these carousing men, and their loud songs and laughter. Whenever I read Stevenson's opening chapters in "The Treasure Island," haunted as they are by the rough old pirate chanting his wild songs to the " company " gathered in the Admiral Benbow, I think again of my lonely bedroom, and the very little and very frightened boy who lay there, listening to the sailormen carousing in the tavern in the lane running by our house."

Mr Harvey stood up and paced the room as he recalled the picture to his mind.

" These meetings used to end always in the one way. A door would open, heavy boots would crunch along the sanded floor, the door would bang to again. Then I would hear a rumbling gusty voice, shouting: ‘Good-night, John.’

“‘Good-night, Bill,’ another voice, full of the growling sounds which men acquire by shouting above the roar of wind and the sea, would answer.

“They would repeat their farewells again and again, and after, in the silence, I could hear their big sea boots crunching the stones, as the sailormen, not always sober, staggered down the dark narrow lane to their homes.”

III

“Yes, that was my childhood,” Mr Harvey answered, at a later date. “If your readers are interested, you might tell them that. Also, you might say I was just like other little boys, and became entangled in the usual scrapes. And there were long days spent in paddling about the creeks in the small yacht my father used to lend us; memorable excursions about the river mouth; many separations, the first one being when I went off at the age of four to a dame school kept by a Miss Payton, in Derbyshire. I can still picture from my early memories of those first years at school, how glad I was to be back amongst the familiar sights and sounds of Wyvenhoe again, breathing the atmosphere of tar and salt and oil which any seaport now recalls to me.”

"Can you remember any more of those early years?" I asked, finding my subject again warm with recollections of these impressionable years.

"Only my father; a big man in my childish eyes, ever coming into and going out of our daily lives. He was always active, and always very much preoccupied. His business frequently took him away from home at that time, and some of his absences were long ones. I remember how eagerly we all looked for his return when he was away. I can see him now as he was—bending over his plans in the drawing office, moving rapidly about the yard, coming hurriedly to the house and going off again with the same restless activity. Suddenly there would be a gap in our lives during one of his absences, and then, just as suddenly, it seemed to us, he would come back again and life would follow the old routine.

"I see him," said Mr Harvey, speaking slowly, "as a man who had very little time and many preoccupations, and of course he could spare very few hours for our tiny circle of childish interests. He was very kind and patient; had a rare understanding of the child mind, and entered warmly into our play and ways of thought whenever he had the leisure. He was very indulgent with us too, and would do anything to give us pleasure. I remember, when he was at home, however busy he might have been, he would come up to my bedroom, stay a moment talking cheerily, and then depart after tucking me up with a caress.

"My mother," said Mr Harvey, almost anticipating my unspoken thought, "I remember as being very pretty in my childish eyes. But she was always an invalid, and in her latter days suffered much. She was not able to take a full interest in our lives for many years, and because of this we were sent to school early. My last vivid recollection of my early childhood was the end. My father had taken a house on Wyvenhoe Heath, a much brighter place, standing high above the level of the river. I think we were all happier there. In those years we, my mother and I, travelled a great deal. She was then restlessly going from place to place searching for the better health she never found. After a long absence from Wyvenhoe, we came home from one of these pilgrimages—the last of her wanderings in the vain quest for health. There came an evening when we children were staying with relatives in Wyvenhoe, and the house was full of other young people, too. We were enjoying private theatricals and made up a very merry party, the fun of the evening having been uproarious. Before the gathering was over, and much to our dismay, we were summoned home. I recall my mother as I saw her then for the last time on my arrival home—the stillness of the room, the icy coldness of her lips. She was dead.

"I think my childish days ended there," Mr Harvey said, after a long pause. "The death of my mother seemed to mark a period in my life. There was much change in our surroundings, and though the children were kept together in a home established by a wonderful aunt of ours, who with rare devotion acted as our second mother, I seemed to pass from childhood to the schoolboy stage of life about that period, and any recollection I have of early days, beyond the few fugitive pictures I have been able to recall, take me on to my schooldays and the years when my father looked to me to show some preference indicating the activity in life I should like to follow."

IV

Long after I began to write these pages in the life of Martin Harvey, we decided to look up the early scenes of his childhood, and went by road to Colchester and Wyvenhoe. Martin Harvey had not been in the district for a period approaching twenty years, and never shall I forget his delight as John Kurkamp whirled us into Colchester and then slowed down as we travelled to Wyvenhoe.

To me the day was delightful, as it gave me glimpses of a part of Essex I have never seen before —trim, sweet and still countryside, with most characteristic villages studded over the fair landscape, and fine old cottages with the curious yellowish plaster-work which is so much a characteristic of the county.

To Martin Harvey, familiar with Essex from his childhood, the interest of the journey began with Colchester, the town in which he was educated, and the road to Wyvenhoe, which he had traversed so often as a boy.

Never shall I forget his almost boyish delight and his keen interest in almost every building in the main street of Colchester. Every brick and stone had some memory of the past, personal to himself. We had to stay and look at his old school, now a private dwelling. We had to admire a bungalow off the main road, just because it was a bungalow built in his childhood and was still standing. We had to learn the merits of the two ways from Colchester to Wyvenhoe and why one was better than the other. Again, we had to look on the cottage which enshrined Martin Harvey's first love. She was over twenty and he was only fourteen—but a mere difference in age did not matter to Martin Harvey. He recalled how he worshipped her from afar and went regularly to the church services so that he might be near this wonderful divinity. Alas! the romance ended as all such romances do. She married another and was a blooming matron, with the cares of a family, long before Martin Harvey had finished his schooldays.

At Wyvenhoe, together, we went over the early scenes and sights. The little village is almost unchanged. Here and there is a new building, and here and there an old building has gone. I had no difficulty in creating the Wyvenhoe of Martin Harvey's boyhood out of the Wyvenhoe of to-day—even down to the old tavern in which the sailors used to sing their songs long ago. The shipyard is still there, directed by Mr H. Dawes Swan, the firm being widely known as Forrest & Co. Ltd. Mr Dawes Swan kindly piloted us round, and Martin Harvey, forgetting us all, spent a delightful time in reconstructing the yard as it was when he knew it in his earliest childhood.

Last we visited Quay House—then standing empty. An unoccupied house is a desolate thing at the best, but Quay House looked perhaps more lonely in the actor's eyes because of its associations. We rambled through the rooms and passages, full of odd sorts of corners and unexpected doors, and found it easy to understand why the house made such an impression on the childish mind. An interesting old place, it had been built in a way which might have terrors for a lonely and imaginative boy. Up and down stairs we clambered; looking in this room and that; examining all the old corners of the empty house, including the room in which Mr Harvey's father built a stage—the scene of Martin Harvey's first public appearance. Every one of these silent rooms and passages was alive with memories, and no doubt the actor, grown silent now, was busy peopling them with shadows from the past. I have seen Martin Harvey in many settings, but I like to remember him standing in an empty room as the light of a wintry afternoon slowly faded. "This is where my father built me a joiner's bench. And see"—as he tore the paper from the wall—"that is the paper I remember underneath. And here my mother—she was a great invalid—used to sit for hours," he said later. For some time we lingered in the room, looking out of its bay window over the creek and on to the marshes, now lonely and losing their shape and colour in the waning light. Outside, we met a man who remembered Quay House peopled as it used to be when Martin Harvey was a boy. The actor and the man who had known him as a boy remained talking over old times and friends until the light had entirely failed. To Martin Harvey this was the moment of our pleasant enterprise, and in it the past began to live again.

CHAPTER V

OFF TO SCHOOL—AN EARLY TASTE FOR DRAWING—EDUCATION FOR NAVAL ARCHITECTURE—KING'S COLLEGE SCHOOLDAYS—THE ACTOR'S INTEREST IN OLD LONDON—THE MISTAKEN APPRENTICE—A PERILOUS YACHTING ENTERPRISE—MARTIN HARVEY'S FIRST APPEARANCE AS AN ACTOR—THREATENED RUIN OF A GREAT CAREER—FIRST VISITS TO THEATRES

I

"TELL me about your schooldays," I said to Martin Harvey, one day, as we walked along the promenade at Southport, where the actor manager was fulfilling one of the weeks in his autumn tour.

Mr Harvey chuckled to himself whimsically and there was mischief in his clear eye.

"The business of going over the past reminds me of after-dinner speaking," he said slowly. "It is only when one gets home that what one considers the apt thing to say occurs to the mind. Your suggestion 'tell me about your schooldays,' simple as it sounds, seems to drive away every recollection I have of them. The art of remembering is like the capacity to recall good stories—somewhat fickle in operation and most uncertain when most needed."

"Recalling memories is like telling the good story," I suggested. "One good story begets another; one fertile minute of remembering stirs a whole series of buried memories."

"I am bound to confess my career at school was both mute and inglorious," my companion replied, promptly assenting to my suggestion. "I don't remember doing anything wonderful, and I showed little capacity for any subject beyond drawing."

"You draw well to-day," I suggested, remembering the crowded house of the evening before.

"I am afraid," he said, with an answering gleam of his expressive eye, "my drawing was easily first, though not in the sense you mean. In the real things that count at school I fancy I was difficult. I did not make much headway with the higher mathematics, and I believe my record was not completely satisfactory to my father, who expected great things from me. If popularity among my schoolfellows is to be gauged by nicknames, I think I must have been popular. I used to lie awake in the dormitory at Linton House, going through the alphabet, and I believe I had a nickname for every letter in it. I was also a robust, active boy, enjoyed football, took my share of the outdoor life and games of the school, and liked the hustle and combat of the life of our small world.

"My first school as distinct from the dame school was Linton House, Colchester," continued Mr Harvey. "It was five miles from Wyvenhoe, and I used to get home on the Saturday for the week-end. Our home was kept together by a sister of my mother, a wonderful woman, of strong personality, whose influence over us all was very good, in every way. She had lived most of her life in Scotland, having married a Scotsman, and she was full of the purposeful spirit of that country."

"Were you educated with any definite idea of the profession you were to follow ?" I asked.

"Oh yes; I think my father always had in mind the belief that I would follow him in his profession as a naval architect. I think he planned everything he did for me as a boy from that point of view. He believed after my schooldays I should go into the shipyard as apprentice, and then I was to have gone on to the 'Royal School of Naval Architecture.' That programme was not carried out, and, as you will see, it was due to the fact that my aptitude did not justify such an expensive adventure.

"I left Linton House in due course, and went to King's College, in its old quarters at Somerset House, for some time. My aunt kept a house open for us at Crouch End, and I used to travel up to the College daily. I am afraid my history at King's College was much the same as it was at Linton House. The only distinction I can remember earning was for drawing. Professor De la Motte was the drawing master, and I always remember how much I was attracted by him. He was a delightful man, with great powers of sympathy, and I enjoyed being in his classes. At the time I was at King's, there was an open competition in freehand drawing, and though I was in the lowest class but one I went in for it. I think one of the proudest moments of my life was when I heard I had won it. Dr Maclear, the principal, sent for me one morning, and I recall how I passed to his dreaded rooms in fear and trembling. I could not think what he wanted with me and ransacked my young brains for the possible offences I might have committed which would justify the birch."

Mr Harvey smiled to himself at the picture he was drawing of the King's boy going shudderingly to the interview with his principal.

"It was with a beating heart that I entered the study, but the interview was more delightful than I had anticipated. Dr Maclear, I remember as a stern, just man and, of course, he was very aloof from my world. My interview with him was a very short one.

"'You have taken the first-class in drawing,' he said.

"I remember now the flush of pleasure which seemed to suffuse my whole being, but I was too confused to answer.

"'You have done very well,' Dr Maclear added gravely, and the interview came to an end.

"I recall," Mr Harvey continued, with the pride of a man interested wholly in the arts and crafts, "how nice Professor De la Motte was about the matter, and the feeling of pride I had when he laid his hand on my shoulder and said: 'Are you the boy who made that beautiful drawing?'

"Yes," said Mr Harvey, pursuing his own thoughts, "I liked those days at King's, but better still, I liked the daily journey to town. I used to come up from Crouch End to Farringdon Street and walk on to King's, always choosing to travel through Staple Inn and Lincoln's Inn, the charm of which I felt even in those days—and my early delight in their old-world atmosphere, I am happy to say, is with me still."

I prompted Mr Harvey to tell me more of his life at King's.

"My last year at the school was devoted entirely to higher mathematics," he went on, "as a preparation for my studies in naval architecture. I am afraid it was no use. I simply could not absorb mathematics. My master, who in those days was Alexander Hall, looked on me more in sorrow than in anger. I think he pitied me as a boy who was an utter dunderhead, in mathematics. I recall a profound sense of humiliation when one of my friends, a fellow-student, told me of an indiscreet opinion Alexander Hall had passed on my mathematical abilities. This lad was taking private lessons from Hall, and in the course of one of them the professor, in some casual reference to myself, added: 'You know, the poor boy has not got any brains at all.'"

I looked at Mr Harvey as we strode on side by side. He was evidently thinking of the past with the pleasure most men feel when they recall the school period.

"It was sufficiently humiliating," I pointed out, by way of comment.

The actor shrugged his shoulders.

" That sort of thing," he said, his voice warm with laughter, " does not depress one much, at the age of fifteen."

II

" I think you might complete the tragic story of my education," Mr Harvey said, a day later in the same week, and he continued the narrative for me, covering the points I suggested.

" I left King's in due course and went back to Wyvenhoe to fulfil my father's dearest wish, which was to see me following in his footsteps as a naval architect."

" It seems to have miscarried," I said.

" Yes—it miscarried from the first. At the age of fifteen I went back to Wyvenhoe, and entered the shipyard as an apprentice. Even then my father had revised his opinion of my prospects. I did not go to the School of Naval Architecture. The reason of the alteration in his plans for me was obvious. My failure in mathematics probably discouraged him and prevented this side of my professional education going further. The idea he substituted for the original plans was to apprentice me to the firm, starting me on the lowest rung of the ladder. I was to gain a practical knowledge of the work and with this end in view my father sent me to the carpenter's shop. He also rigged up a bench for me, in a room at home, at which I used to work. From the carpenter's shop I was to go into the yard and see the various departments at work, and then on to the draughtsmen's offices where the designs were made, the boats being drawn out in the mould loft full size. I used to get up at five-thirty to start work in the shipyard, but I am afraid I only retired to my office and translated Fénélon's 'Telemaque.' "

As Martin Harvey told me these prosaic details of his life as a shipbuilder, I could not help but smile to myself. I had seen him play Pelleas overnight and Hamlet only a few evenings before. I pictured the sturdy, active shipbuilder in his yard at Wyvenhoe confronted with the problem of such a son. His pride was in the beautiful work of his yards—the graceful yachts which made his name as famous in the fashionable racing waters of that day as his son's was destined to become in an entirely different world. The elder Harvey's hope was that the boy rising at his heels should carry on the tradition which was the pride of his life, and it was a hope, if he could have seen into the future, bound to result in failure. It did not, however, need any power of anticipating the future for the father to realise the failure of his hope so far as the naval tradition was concerned. I put it to Mr Harvey, knowing his career, that the practical work of the shipyard was rather an incongruous outlook for the boy who was the father of a man whose life is given to the purpose of visualising beautiful dreams. It is difficult to see how the boy who was to play Pelleas could be content with the practical routine of the carpenter's shop and the drawing office.

When I pointed this out, Mr Harvey kindly completed the picture.

"No," he said, "the only thing about a yacht which appealed to me was its artistic aspect—the beauty of the work, the smartness of the completed boat and the grace and charm of its lines. I suppose I got from my association with yacht designing and building a love of line and proportion which has always been useful to me. My father had an unerring sense of line, and to this day if you see one of his yachts you can tell it as his work by its character and individuality. Though I loved the shape of the yachts we turned out, and the beautiful craft of the work, I did not take kindly to the practical business of building. The only interest I displayed was a desire I had to build and sail the smallest craft ever seen on the Colne, and I did make with my own hands a weird boat some four feet six inches long, which I took proudly to the water's side. I got afloat all right, with the water lapping within two inches of its gunwale, and bravely paddled out to midstream. I hardly think the right word is 'brave.' I was simply unconscious of the folly of the adventure, and when I come to think of the incident I realise how lucky I was to get back alive. My father happened to be passing along the quay at the time, and saw me in my absurd craft. He ordered me to shore but I could not get back; so I was promptly hauled to land, only to hear my father's indignant comments on the enterprise. That was my one and only effort at shipbuilding, and about that time my lack of interest in the work became apparent." As the story of Martin Harvey's failure in the shipyard is bound up with his final choice of the stage as a career, we may perhaps leave the *dénouement* to another chapter.

. . . .

III

Before we forsake this interesting period of childhood, it is perhaps as well to record Martin Harvey's first appearance on the stage, which dates so far back as his juvenile days in Wyvenhoe.

Mr Harvey's father, although immersed in practical business affairs, was very fond of private theatricals. He not only liked to see his young people preparing plays and appearing in them, but believed it was a healthy recreation both for their minds and bodies. He carried this point of view much further than the routine of his little family, and attempted to interest the villagers in his ideas. In such a village as Wyvenhoe, what entertainments the residents enjoyed had to be organised by a few public-spirited residents. Mr Harvey's father was one of the first to take part in such enterprises, and gave all the assistance he could to the social life of the village. His love of private theatricals led him to encourage his young family and their friends to prepare public performances, to which the villagers might be invited. This theatrical enterprise should have taken place in the village schoolroom, but apparently the shipbuilder was a little in advance of his time.

At all events the vicar did not approve of the proposed theatrical representations, and refused his countenance. What is of more importance still, he refused the use of the schoolroom to Mr Harvey and his young players. The idea of the performance was not given up, though the theatre had to be changed. One of the rooms at the top of Mr Harvey's rambling house was transformed into a miniature theatre, and a suitable stage and scenery were provided, and in this little playhouse the series of performance was given.

The tiny theatre at the top of Quay House is interesting to readers of this book, because on its boards Martin Harvey began his career as an actor. One of the first plays included in the programme was *The Frog and the Princess*, and in this the boy, Martin, was cast for the part of the Princess. It will be seen that the great actor of to-day began his career as a leading artiste, playing one of the title-rôles as a first experience. Moreover, it is odd to note the beginnings of his career were given over to a branch of the art which in the music-hall profession is called " female impersonation." Martin Harvey's first appearance was in petticoats, and a most disastrous first appearance it proved to be.

Martin Harvey loves to tell this story. I have heard him recall the incident several times and there is laughter in his eyes and in every line of his face, and a delighted chuckle in his sonorous voice, as he repeats the horrid details. It is a sad and tragic narrative.

"Oh yes, that was my first appearance," he will say nonchalantly, baiting the trap.

"Was the boy father to the man?" you ask, falling into the trap. "Did this first appearance indicate any special aptitude for the theatre? Could you say, even in those early days, that there were glimmerings of a talent, latent and waiting to be discovered on the lines so many of us know you have developed?"

"Oh dear, no, I hope not," your host will say, and the first hint of laughter begins to play about his expressive face. "It was a disaster—a terrible disaster. We children were very excited as we bustled about amongst the little crowd gathered together in the tiny theatre. My father, hospitably inclined, had provided various forms of light refreshments for his guests, which included amongst other details a liberal supply of sherry and biscuits. These were handed to the audience at intervals, and I was told off to carry round the tray. I regret to say I was tempted and I fell; indeed, I betrayed my trust."

You press the actor to tell you the story of his temptation and fall, and the recital passes on to the tragic conclusion.

"Ha!" he will say, "I took advantage of my stewardship and by doing so failed to keep faith with my audience for the only time in my life. While handing the sherry and the biscuits round to our friends, I took occasion, surreptitiously, to treat myself more generously than each individual in the audience. To be perfectly frank, I took more sherry than was good for me and, to borrow the words of Bret Harte:

> "'*I smiled a kind of sickly smile, and curled up on the floor,*
> *And the subsequent proceedings interested me no more!*'

"The Princess, I regret to say, could not carry her over-generous share of the sherry like a gentleman and any gleams of a dormant genius I might have shown failed to reveal themselves through the depravity of my juvenile habits."

One can only say this terrible story proved a solemn warning to our actor. At the age of six, face to face with a theatrical career ruined by his habits, Martin Harvey, perhaps under the stimulus of his parent's outspoken comments, reconsidered the situation and came back from the deeps.

IV

Martin Harvey's actual first contact with the theatre happened during his King's College days, and may be recorded here. Coming and going from Crouch End to the College in the Strand, on certain memorable afternoons the boy found a new world of enchantment viewed at long intervals from a seat in the pit.

"My first recollections of the theatre?" your host will say, his face lighting with enthusiasm. "I remember them vividly, as I think every man remembers his first visits to the theatre as a boy. I saw first of all Sothern as Lord Dundreary—a piece of exquisite fooling which enchanted London for years. I know how Sothern delighted me and how much I laughed. Everyone in those days laughed with Sothern over his Lord Dundreary. But the red-letter day of my boyhood was a visit to the Lyceum. I saw Henry Irving play Hamlet. It produced an impression which deepens with the years. Even as a boy I was awed by the strange, weird beauty of Irving's Hamlet, and by the curious sense of tragic loneliness—a haunting effect—which distinguished Irving's performance from any Hamlet I have ever seen. I recall the eerie beauty of the atmosphere Irving created on the stage. I remember his pale, wonderful face, his raven-black hair, the rather curious, sometimes grotesque, movements of his limbs, and the long, white claw-like hands—one of Irving's most expressive features—playing almost incessantly with the trinkets about his pouch. His air of mental detachment, his attractive yet strangely angular grace, the dream-like beauty of the surroundings; the other-worldly note of isolation; the superb dignity of the tragic figure, were the recollections I carried from that memorable performance. I shall never forget the hysterical shriek Irving gave as he fell into the king's chair after the performance had proved the ghost of his father had revealed to him the truth."

This performance of *Hamlet* is a subject over which Mr Harvey will grow enthusiastic at any moment. When he speaks of Irving's Hamlet his voice reveals a passionate admiration for the great Lyceum manager of a quality that might be called religious. This early recognition of the magnetic force of Irving's acting by the boy Harvey is worth accentuating. Strange things do come about in life. The truant student, snatching holiday from King's College School, sat at the feet of Irving as a boy, in one of the most magnificent moments of his artistic life. A playgoer amongst a crowd of playgoers, he fought his way into the pit of the old Lyceum. He had left for a moment the losing battle he was waging with the higher mathematics—the necessary key to his destined career as a builder of boats. The boy did not know he had in actual fact made a dramatic choice. The artist who moved him so intensely in a world of beauty, to which he had strayed casually, was in the end to point the way to a great career. The master mind of the man who swayed the boy in the pit was to shape the destiny of the same boy as a young actor upon the stage. The future was curtained and concealed but it held all this for the boy, who, silent, amazed and impressed, saw Irving for the first time from a seat in the Lyceum pit.

CHAPTER VI

ADOLESCENT UNREST—A PERIOD OF PROFOUND IRRITATION—FAILURE OF THE APPRENTICESHIP PLAN—THE BEAU BRUMMEL PHASE—AN EARLY TASTE FOR COLLECTING—MR HARVEY SENIOR AND THE ITALIAN PROPOSAL—MARTIN HARVEY AT A DIFFICULT AGE—A VISIT TO THE THEATRE AND ITS EFFECT—THE CHOICE OF THE STAGE AS A CAREER—SIR HENRY IRVING'S OPINION AND SIR W. S. GILBERT'S ADVICE

I

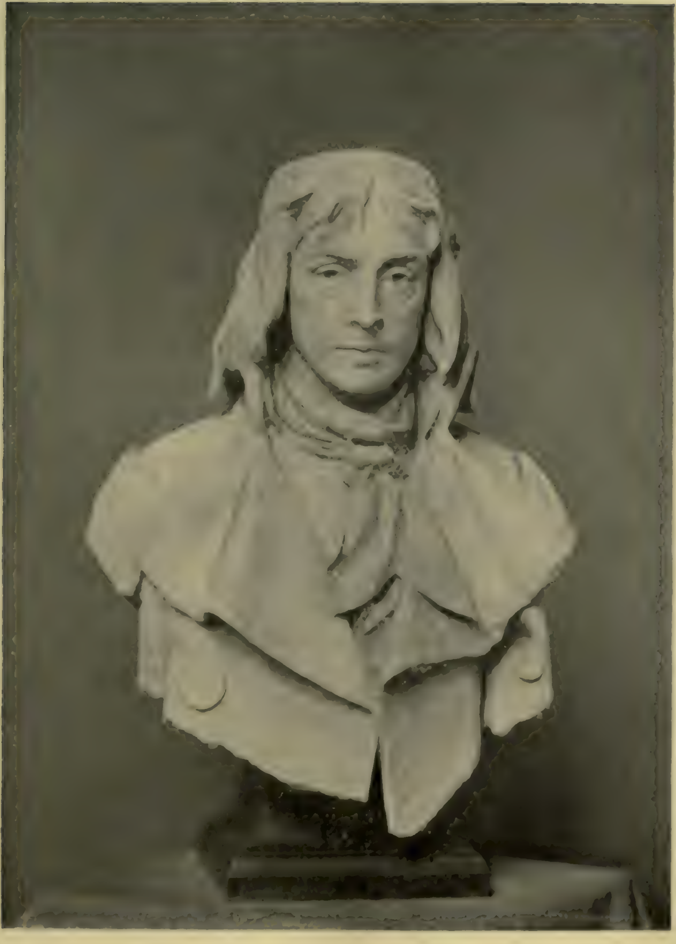
THE circumstances which finally brought the boy, Martin Harvey, from the quiet village of Wyvenhoe to London and a career upon the stage are interesting from many points of view. The chief interest of this part of the life story of Mr Harvey lies in the fact that it differs materially from the conventional stories usually told by distinguished actors of the adolescent period.

As a rule, a desire to join the theatrical profession asserts itself in the lives of young people of the imaginative, or artistic, temperament about the age of seventeen or eighteen. In most cases it is only a phase, a mental disorder peculiar to the adolescent, just as measles are a familiar trouble of childhood. A desire to "go on the stage," to become an actor or actress, to thrill large audiences, to live in an atmosphere of limelight, encouraged by thunderous peals of applause, passes out of the average life without leaving a more permanent impression on the mind than a still earlier attack of the commonest infantile disease leaves upon the physique.

Actors, looking back, usually remember this desire as showing itself early in the youthful period and persisting in the teeth of great discouragement and opposition from parents or guardians. They point to the persistency of their desire as early indication of the soundness of their judgment in adopting a career which time has proved to be the one they should have chosen. They remember early incidents indicating embryonic capacity for the histrionic art; they recall the days when aspiration took definite shape in a determination to succeed on the stage and the average theatrical history then develops into a consistent story of great successes won, step by step, from small beginnings. The history of Mr Harvey's early association with the theatre is diametrically opposed to this most picturesque tradition. As a youth he scarcely knew what he desired to be. Although he had been many times to the theatre, and found each visit an exquisite pleasure, the thought of taking part in the traffic of the footlights did not cross his mind. The circumstances leading to his choice of the stage as a career were largely accidental—the impulse finally coming as a direct suggestion from a despairing father who threw it out at random.

We have reached the point in his career where the boy Harvey had finished his education and had returned to his home to pursue the business of his father as a naval architect and shipbuilder. To understand what happened, it is necessary to catch a glimpse of the boy of sixteen who returned home to puzzle a very practical father. In the development of every boy on the threshold of manhood, there is a difficult period. It is a period of unrest. The boy goes through a miserable year of profound discontent. Privately, he has opulent and majestic conceptions of the place he will occupy in the sun. Not for him the prosaic tasks—he is to live in the realms of great romance and adventure, to lead victorious armies, to mould opinion, to revolutionise the arts and, generally, in a large way, to impress his personality on the spirit of the age. Side by side with these very vague aspirations, he becomes conscious of his own personality. At the age of eighteen, every boy is a dandy at heart, and in the hours when he is not leading forlorn but spectacular hopes, he is absorbed in planning striking sartorial effects to enhance the value of his own personality. This was the problem confronting the respected and highly practical Wyvenhoe shipbuilder. He was face to face with a developing personality, singularly nervous and highly imaginative, who made this phase of boyhood a difficult time both for himself and his responsible parent. Martin Harvey became a problem which his father, shrewd man as he was, failed to understand, and though he found a solution for it—the way out was purely accidental, and largely a leap in the dark.

" I reached an age," Martin Harvey said to me, as we talked over the past, " which so many other boys reach and I became, as many such boys do, a source of profound irritation to my father. I began to take an exaggerated interest in my clothes and in that period became a sort of incipient Beau Brummel. My absorption in such matters as the cut of a coat, the shape of a collar, or the pattern of a tie, irritated my dear, practical father beyond words. I think, however, he would have tolerated this aspect of my character, realising it as a phase that would pass. But most of my attitude to life at the time displeased him. What money I did not spend on carrying out my ideas of fine raiment, I began to sink in a passion for collecting which I discovered at that time. I developed a mania for acquiring objects of art—a mania which was not a passing phase of adolescence, for it has clung to me all my life. My bedroom became a museum, and my available cash steadily materialised in the form of treasure. I filled my room with old weapons, china, pictures and other bric-à-brac, to the astonishment and scorn of my father, but I like to remember to-day that, in my collecting, oddly foolish as it must have seemed, I still had a little method behind my madness. Much of what I bought was the reverse of treasure trove, but several of my youthful finds remain amongst my treasures to-day, and either show I was at times discriminating in my purchases or extremely lucky. Side by side with my consuming passions for fine clothes and extra-



Sidney Carton

A Bust by Sir George Frampton

ordinary bric-à-brac I developed fiery aspirations to do something splendid. I am not now certain to where my aims would have led me, but they appear to have been rather in the direction of literature than towards the craft of the stage."

This then was the problem of the stern, old shipbuilder at Wyvenhoe, a boy who appeared to do his share of superintending the work of the yard in patent-leather boots; a boy whose bedroom was apparently a hideous jumble of strange treasure holding no value in the parental eyes, but serving to indicate only an undesirable habit of very foolishly wasting money; a boy who, when left at work upon plans in the drawing-office, would be found, more likely than not, attempting metrical romances in the manner of Byron or Scott or absorbed in Scandinavian mythology. Martin Harvey neglected his work as a shipbuilder by day and sat up till the small hours, in his wonderfully decorated bedroom, composing interminable metrical romances and Scandinavian sagas in assonance.

A few words from that curious boy now grown a man—the boy who grew up as a contradiction to every one of his father's ideals—complete the picture of a difficult period. "I failed in mathematics; I failed to show interest in the work of the yard—the mainspring of my father's life; I failed even to show any practical faculties likely to lead my father to hope for any change of attitude in the future. My father was wonderfully patient with me and when I think how much I disappointed him and the cause I gave him for his irritation, I cannot be sufficiently grateful to his memory. With all the goodwill in the world, on his part, and perhaps due to a plentiful lack of it on my own side—the breach between us, so far as sympathy was concerned, widened day by day. He did not understand the ferment of mind in which I found myself, and I understood it still less than he did. He pressed me to say what I wanted to be and I could not tell him. In the end—there were days in which we never spoke—I had irritated my father so much that he could not trust himself to address me. When, one day, he sent me back from the shipyard, because he did not approve of my patent-leather boots and when, in the evening of the same day, I announced my desire to retire to Italy and devote myself to lyrical poetry, my father, very properly perhaps, called me a damned ass, and finally came to the conclusion that I was hopelessly mad."

The end of this little scene was a secret conspiracy on the part of the boy Harvey to terminate the difficulties by getting out of them. With one of the apprentices in the yard, he planned to run away to Manitoba and grain, or Italy and poetry—which, did not matter to them. There was a great boom, at the period, in Canada. The colony was then considered as a land flowing with milk and honey. The two youths laid their plans to make a bolt for Canada, the promised land of freedom and wealth beyond the dreams of avarice. They were to go on the land after securing the Government's offer of a free one hundred and sixty acres and become prosperous farmers — instead of which the plans collapsed, as such plans do, the other apprentice would not start and Martin Harvey, almost immediately after, received his direct impulse towards the stage.

Here then we have the youth. Relatives who knew him in this period, speak of Martin Harvey as being slight of habit, but physically robust, active and strong. His temperament was gay at times, but there were periods of moodiness and morbid brooding. His return to Wyvenhoe and the long stretches of salt marsh where the dominant note of melancholy is sounded at nightfall by the sad cry of the hovering curlew; to the influence of the lonely old house with its environment of religious mysticism—the atmosphere of Swedenborgianism—was producing a soil in which idealism, a love of decay, of the fantastic and the unreal were beginning to flourish. The growth of the ego followed normal phases in its addiction to purple and fine linen, or the tailor's equivalents for them. But also one detects behind the mad welter of extravagance a few indications pointing to the real boy who was the father of the man. The blind instinct towards the acquisition of objects of art; the youthful mind, leaning to the movement and sound of the heroic in the literature of the hardy Norsemen, showed a dawning love of beauty, both in its physical and spiritual manifestations. Curious to observe, indeed, when the ferment of the adolescent mind subsided and its follies were corrected by the ripening judgment of maturity, these qualities remained and developed with increasing intensity, and are to-day a great part of the inspiration and the very charming essence of the actor's art.

II

It is all very well, in the light of subsequent events, to see the deadlock in the household at Wyvenhoe from its merely humorous aspect. The situation had its grave side, and was a very real and human difficulty. Here was the boy, and a very difficult boy at that, at an age when he should have been showing some definite preference towards his mission in life. On the other hand was his father, a gravely responsible man, anxious only for one outcome—that the boy should himself choose a profession in life which he might hope to follow with reasonable prospects of success. All the hardy and practical shipbuilder could get out of his offspring was the nebulous suggestion that he should be allowed to retire to Italy, there to devote himself to lyrical poetry. To-day, Mr Harvey will shake his head and with a half sigh will regret his preference was not adopted, but Italy and lyrical poetry formed no basis for a career commending itself to Mr Harvey, senior, as one that he should further. He was prepared to give up his very natural dream of seeing his son follow in his footsteps, but not for Italy and lyrical poetry. It is amusing to note how the difficulty was solved by the father with a casual touch which in the end seems after all to have been an inspiration.

The situation remained as it was—the father still groping after some insight into what his son would prefer to be, and it was understood after the patent-leather-boot incident that Martin would not serve either his own interests or the firm's by remaining in the shipbuilder's office and yard.

The end came—almost happily. The boy and his father travelled up to town, and, while staying at the house kept open at Crouch End, went about London seeing the sights for a few days, the father no doubt hoping he would obtain some insight into the tastes of his unaccountable son in the process.

Amongst the entertainments Mr Harvey and his son saw together was a performance of Gilbert's *Pinafore*, at the Opera Comique, by a company of children. Going home to Colchester, the two travelled together, and talked much about the performance as they sat opposite each other in the railway carriage.

" I remember the occasion well," Martin Harvey told me, the incident coming out in response to my frequent request to be told of his first connection with the stage. " I betrayed a great deal of interest in the performance of the children in *Pinafore*, and talked of it freely to my father. I suppose the trouble at home was uppermost in my father's mind, and he was perhaps impressed by the fact that for the first time I took an interest in some sane subject.

At all events, after listening to my thoughts on the performance his comment was: 'Well, how would you like to do that?' He meant, how would I like the work of the stage. My reply was perhaps ungracious. Half-heartedly, and more in order to please my father, I said I thought I would like the work, and much to my surprise he took me at my word. Looking back, it is curious how one remembers these incidents. Every phase of the conversation is printed on my mind. I remember we were passing through Marks Tey at the time my father put the question to me, and I can recall even yet the character of the landscape, the kind of day it was, the detail of the carriage in which we travelled, where my father sat and how he looked. Certainly that day and the conversation in the train determined my future movements."

"It is rather different from the usual story of parental opposition," I suggested.

"Yes," replied Mr Harvey; "but you should remember my father was different from other men. He did not know much about the theatre, but all he knew he considered good. He saw the theatre as a place in which splendid thoughts were uttered and splendid dreams were realised—its emotional effect appealed to his religious sense. He had a fixed belief that the work of an actor was good both for the actor and for his audience, and a fitting career for his son. You will remember how ardently and seriously he pursued his admiration for the theatre and dramatic art by encouraging us in private theatricals as children, and when my wish coincided with his suggestion, he took my desire as seriously as if I had elected to go into one of the learned professions—the bar, medicine, or the church."

"Indeed," continued Mr Harvey, in a reminiscent vein, "my father was splendid. Though the fact that I would not follow in his footsteps must have been a bitter pill for him to swallow, he set about the suggestion of a new career with characteristic thoroughness and his one concern was to see I embarked on it with every hope of success, and with every condition likely to help me secure it, in my favour."

The new career was earnestly debated by both father and son. About this time, Martin Harvey had acquired Goethe's *Wilhelm Meister*, and became absorbed in the hero's enthusiasm for work on the stage. The suggestion, made by his father almost in despair, had borne fruit, and the son was daily growing more eager to follow it out. It became a question of ways and means. The elder Harvey was convinced that an actor should have only the best of education and prepared at once to send his son to Oxford, as a fitting preparation for the new profession. This step was carefully considered by both father and son.

"The question," explained Mr Harvey, as we went over the incidents leading to his appearance on the stage, "was whether I should go to Oxford or not. My father was in favour of Oxford, but I regret to say I was not. I had begun to have ideas of my own, and thought the University would be a waste of time. At this juncture I first came into actual contact with Sir Henry Irving—at that time still Mr Irving and then at the height of his great career at the Lyceum. Without consulting anyone, I wrote to Sir Henry, told him of my intention to go upon the stage and begged his advice as to whether a University degree was necessary, or not. He replied almost at once, saying a University degree was not essential, and advised me to go and study with Mr Lacy, a well-known tutor of that day. This letter of Sir Henry's I still preserve and cherish. With it in my hand I went to my father, who conceded he could not challenge an opinion from the head of the theatrical profession. The Oxford proposal was therefore abandoned, and our difficulty was then to decide the best means of securing an introduction to the work I had decided to adopt."

How the matter ended is easily told. Mr Harvey, senior, was not the type of man who makes guesses about matters he does not fully understand, and circumstances happened to favour the very thorough inquiries he conducted. At that time, he was engaged in building a yacht for the late Sir W. S. Gilbert. Mr Harvey knew Mr Gilbert, in addition to being a yacht owner, was talked of as a very successful dramatic author, and naturally consulted him one day when he came down to the yard over some business concerning the yacht.

" I remember the day when I was first introduced to Mr Gilbert, as he then was," said Mr Harvey.

"He was crossing the yard with my father, and I happened to meet them.'

"'This is the young man who wants to go on the stage,' said my father, and the two men stopped in their walk and eyed me, critically.

"We stood there discussing my prospects, and Gilbert was very charming about the matter. He advised that I should be sent as a pupil to John Ryder, a well-known old-time actor who had a great vogue as a teacher of aspirants for the stage. Gilbert also provided me with a letter of introduction to Mr Ryder, and before departing promised, when I had gained some experience under my tutor, he would do whatever he could to advance my interests."

These influences settled the fate of Martin Harvey. Mr Harvey was satisfied first that his son had chosen a career which might be congenial to him, and secondly, that the advice of Sir Henry Irving and Sir W. S. Gilbert was of a character he could follow. He determined then and there to send the youth to town to resume his studies. He had left King's College School a singularly unpromising student, making a very indifferent preparation for the business of shipbuilding. Martin Harvey returned to the Strand and began another process of education, under an actor and elocutionist of the old school, which was in the end to place him in the forefront of English actor managers.

This selection of a career was a more serious matter at the time for Mr Harvey than it was for the son. I ought to be able to say as a faithful Boswell that our hero, once imbued with aspiration, approached his task with a fanatic's zeal. I am conscious of the claims of tradition and would prefer to suggest that the father, casually blowing on the spark, had lighted already a mighty fire of hope, ambition and devotion. Take the incident in the conventional manner and figure to yourself this youth marching on London, after making the prophetic assertion that he would mount the highest rung of the theatrical ladder, and you have a pleasing picture, and one conforming to all the rules of good composition. Alas! I am bound to admit, pleasing as the picture is, it does not square with the actual facts. Interested, but certainly not keen, Martin Harvey went into the business of the theatre very much as he drifted through the shipyard. He could not go on for ever being inactive; a change was necessary; the suggestion he should become an actor was the only one made which appealed to him. A youth in a ferment, eager for change, perhaps a little curious, he came to town and a new world, thinking very little about anything but the pleasure it gave him to be out of the old world of plans, and boats, the scent of tar and wood and the acrid odour of the salt marshes, at Wyvenhoe. He came to a new world and a very new type of personality so far as he was concerned—old John Ryder, a formidable personage, eminently qualified to tone down the awkward angles of a boy who had been dreaming away his adolescence in a quiet village on the Essex coast.

CHAPTER VII

TUITION UNDER JOHN RYDER—ONE OF THE OLD SCHOOL—SOME STORIES AND CHARACTERISTICS—LOVEDAY AND RYDER'S SUNDAY DINNER—RYDER AND CHARLES KEAN—RYDER'S METHOD OF TEACHING—AN EXTRAORDINARY JULIET—A MENACING FOREFINGER—WHAT RYDER TAUGHT THE WOULD-BE ACTOR—AN EXPENSIVE LESSON AND ITS RESULTS

I

ALWAYS delightfully fresh and entertaining in talking over the past, Martin Harvey is never more interesting to his hearer than when he is recalling the period which began with his pupilage at John Ryder's. He has a lively affection and a very generous appreciation for the actor who first took him in hand and put him through the process known as "licking one into shape."

John Ryder, described by his pupil, must have been a fascinating personality to the student of character. He was an actor of the old school, a fine figure of a man, with the atmosphere of the theatre written on every line of his bold features. The late Mr J. L. Toole, who also knew his Ryder, leaves one a picture of the old-time actor, whom he describes as a noisy, genial, outspoken, overpowering kind of fellow. He was a type of the actor, now rapidly vanishing, who was of the world of the theatre, lived in it and had no other interests. When not playing, he was always to be found in and about the Strand, and had one or two favourite hostelries, much frequented by the actors of that day, to which he repaired with great regularity. Here one saw John Ryder at his best. His commanding voice, dominating manner, and firm conviction of the value of his own opinions, made him somewhat overbearing in his hours of ease. On the other hand, his intimacy with the world of the theatre, and his knowledge of every side of the traffic of a profession not so well known then as it is to-day, endowed him with a ripened experience and judgment valuable to all who were interested in the stage.

John Ryder had a long innings in the theatre. Never a successful manager, he was in great request as an actor. He supported Charles Kean and was leading man to Macready. G. A. Sala, who knew his world, says that Ryder was one of the only two actors from whom Macready tolerated any familiarity. Ryder had been in America, a great adventure in his day, and went through the Forrest riot with Macready. It is a matter of theatrical history, but worth while noting, that the jealousy existing between the American and English actors led to Macready's Macbeth being hissed by Forrest's sympathisers, and, in the uproar which arose out of the incident, twenty-two men lost their lives. Ellen Terry, playing with Mr Kean, made some of her early appearances with John Ryder. She describes him in her charming reminiscences as " a pugnacious man, an admirable actor and in appearance like an old tree that has been struck by lightning or a greenless barren rock." Ellen Terry also gives a vivid little anecdote which illustrates Ryder's curious brand of humour. " D'ye suppose he engaged me for my powers as an actor," Ryder used to say of Mr Kean. " Not a bit of it! He engaged me for my damned archæological figure."

Mr Harvey tells a good story of this same John Ryder which illustrates his brusque, self-centred manner and something of the outlook of the old-time actor. " John Ryder," says Martin Harvey, " lived about the Strand for most of the week and was rarely at home to dine in the bosom of his family, except on Sundays. Dear old H. J. Loveday, Irving's stage manager, who in his later days was associated with me in the same capacity, told me how he met Ryder one Sunday morning. ' Hullo, old friend,' Loveday sang out. ' Where are you for ? ' John stopped his massive progress in response to the salute and stood before Loveday, rubbing his hands, a smile of pleased anticipation on his somewhat grim features. ' Always make a point of dining at home on Sundays, my boy,' he thundered, in his best heavy-father manner. ' Hope you enjoy it,' politely suggested the ever-genial Loveday. ' Oh yes ! Oh yes ! —humph,' returned Ryder. ' No doubt about it, my boy. The missis—ah !—has got in a leg of mutton. Nothing like a well-cooked leg of mutton—ah—

with caper sauce, my boy. To-day, we—ah—shall have it hot, my boy—hot—and the family will have it cold for the rest of the week."

To such a man went Martin Harvey to take his first lessons in the craft of the theatre, and I cannot do better than let the actor tell his own experiences, though if I were to record all the interesting things Martin Harvey has to say about the tutor who guided him through the most impressionable period of his stage life, the good stories would fill a volume.

"I know many interesting things about John Ryder," said Mr Harvey, when the old actor's name cropped up. "He did all his teaching, when I knew him, in a sitting-room of a private house in Salisbury Street, Strand. He had a big vogue as a teacher and commanded high fees. Ryder was a well-known figure in the Strand, then a much more Bohemian district than it is to-day, and if not acting or teaching, or between lessons, was mostly to be found in Walter Joyce's, then a great theatrical house of call near-bye."

Of Ryder's work and methods of teaching Mr Harvey says: "He had the broad atmosphere of the old, full-blooded school, and his influence over me was a good one. Styles of acting alter, and Ryder's methods would be considered very old-fashioned to-day, and even when I went to him taste was changing. The influence of Irving, then almost at his zenith, had a great part in affecting the alteration in style, and the success of the new man and the new methods used to irritate Ryder—

but never beyond words. He spent a great deal of time denouncing the younger school in very measured, but certainly not carefully selected, terms. Of 'that young man Irving' he talked with lofty contempt, and on no account would Ryder condescend to see the great manager, who was then making theatrical history at the Lyceum. Ryder swept aside every suggestion that Irving had real accomplishments.

"I remember going to see Irving play Iago during that season when Edwin Booth, playing superbly in London, failed to attract the public. Irving was greatly distressed that a representative foreign actor should come to London and play fine parts in such a distinguished manner, and, with the gracious courtesy which made him so fine a figure on our stage, invited Booth to come to the Lyceum and alternate the parts of Othello and Iago with him. It was a regally hospitable thing for Irving to do, a knightly act, and it has never been forgotten by the American public. I recall the incident because it led to a characteristic outburst on the part of Ryder. After being nearly crushed to death in trying to secure a place in the Lyceum pit, I turned up at Ryder's rooms glowing with the overnight memory of seeing Irving play Iago. I described a passage which had greatly impressed me —Irving as Iago, speaking the famous lines where he ponders over ways and means of enmeshing the Moor. Irving stood with his hand over his face, pondering deeply, his forehead ploughed with thought.

When the solution occurred to him, he lifted his head and the audience saw one of those triumphs of expression Irving knew so well how to achieve—his face being full of the light of his dawning conception of the new idea. I described this to John Ryder. He listened, impatiently, until I had reached the end; then in sepulchral tones he ejaculated: 'My business, by God! That's how he finds his effects—I did the very same business years ago!'"

II

"Ryder's acting was distinctly on the broad side—the big voice, the big effect and the big moment were his first considerations. The modern subtlety of expression and effect, the sustained effort after a complete picture of character, did not come within the scope of his conception of the actor's art. He had a sonorous voice and an impressive delivery. Myself, I learnt a great many valuable hints from Ryder. The simple, broad method which delighted him was instilled into me, and he certainly did teach me something in the matter and manner of attack. I have since felt that taking lessons under Ryder was to the actor something like the equivalent of a painter's course of study in the antique.

"We used to work together in his sitting-room in Salisbury Street. Together we went through many of the Shakespearean masterpieces, and though it was good practice for me, and fine study, the situation did occasionally get rather grotesque. For instance, very often we took up *Romeo and Juliet*. I remember the first time he suggested the play, Ryder said: 'You may have to play Romeo some day.' I asked him with the humility of a beginner whether he thought I should ever play Romeo. His answer was: 'Why not, begad; why not?' Our Romeo readings took the form of most of my studies with Ryder. He would sit down with his inevitable cigar stuck in his cast-iron mouth and would read so many pages. He always read Shakespeare with a cigar in his mouth, and he read everything beautifully and with much sympathy and expression. Then I would learn the passage overnight and the following day we played the part over together. I would be Romeo and Ryder, the tall old man, the withered old tree struck by lightning, would be my Juliet. Imagine, if you can, a Juliet standing on the hearthrug, masculine of habit with a cigar in her—or his—mouth while I, a stripling, stood in front of him—or her—and delivered my tender, impassioned lines. If anyone had looked in upon the scene unexpectedly, you can imagine the delicious shock they would have suffered—or enjoyed—on hearing me bid my grim, heavy-jowled, cigar-smoking Juliet to

" 'Arise, fair sun, and kill the envious moon,
Who is already sick and pale with grief,' etc.

"Ryder had many characteristic habits, which came out in his teaching," Martin Harvey continued.

"His method of securing emphasis was altogether his own, and in its way delightful. He would take a passage from Shakespeare and read it through. Then I was asked to imitate his method, or reproduce it. 'No—no, cockie,' he would growl; 'no life, no force, no go.' In order to teach me how to get the necessary life, force, or go, into the passage, he would growl the words out, introducing ordinary modern colloquialisms of an expletive character into the Shakespearean text. His idea was that if I said the frenzied, passionate words remembering I was swearing, the necessary emphasis would come instinctively."

I asked Mr Harvey to give me an instance.

"Why," he answered, with cheerful promptitude, "take Macbeth when, in the midst of his soliloquy, he hears the signal bell ring. He exclaims:

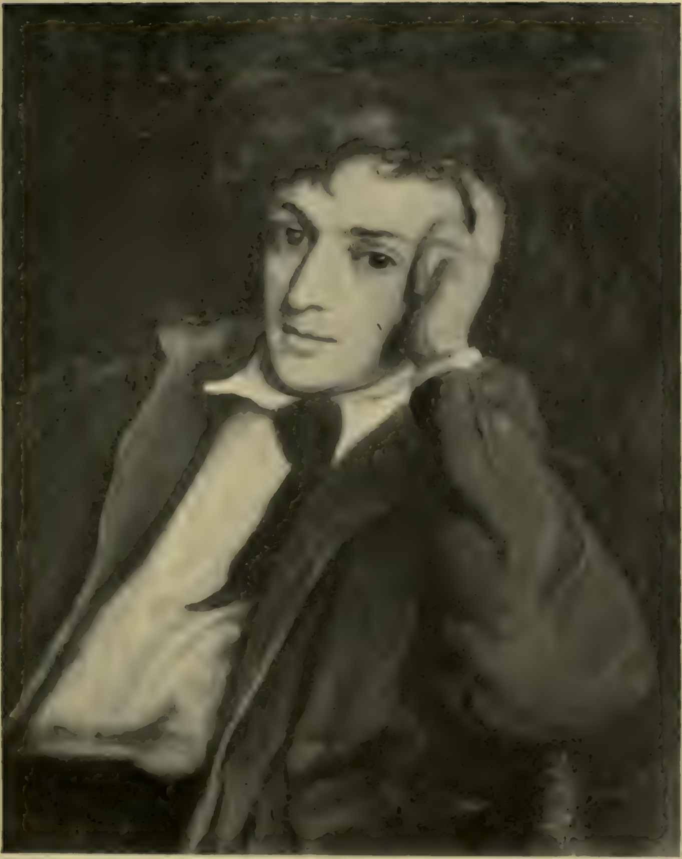
"'I go and it is done; the bell invites me.
Hear it not, Duncan; for it is a knell
That summons thee to Heaven or to Hell!'

"Ryder would render it thus:

"'Hear it not, Duncan; for, *by God*, it is a knell,' etc."

Martin Harvey paused, laughing with the recollection of the method.

"Profane," he agreed at length, as I sat in delighted silence, filling in more blanks. "But there was reason behind the process. Ryder did not want the profane words—he wanted the feeling of them imagined. He required passion in the phrases, and the only way he had of visualising the



An Early Impression of Martin Harvey

From a Portrait by Margaret Fletcher

necessary emphasis was to ask me to repeat the lines as if his somewhat fiery additions to the text were there.

"Yes, he was a man," Martin Harvey continued, "and he had marked mannerisms. I remember seeing him play Kent to Edwin Booth's Lear. Of that performance and Ryder's share in it I recall chiefly an extraordinary effect. Ryder had a mannerism of shaking his forefinger menacingly, very much in the pulpit manner. He did quite a lot of his acting with that finger, and it fascinated me to see him use it. He had a tremendous, bony knuckle—an enormous knuckle—and I used to wonder whether it was due to the work he had given the finger to do. Anyhow, of all Ryder's mannerisms, the minatory knuckle, sawing the air as he explained the text, whether on the stage or while giving lessons in his rooms, is the most lasting recollection I have of him.

"One other tale of Ryder," Martin Harvey continued, "and then perhaps we may leave him. It illustrates the broadness of his methods. As the tale goes—it is a classic in the world of the theatre—he was rehearsing a play in which a thunderstorm was supposed to take place. Men were sent aloft to produce the effect of thunder by rolling cannon balls over the fly floor above the stage. At one point Ryder was dissatisfied with the effect produced by the thunder-makers.

"'No! no! no, that won't do!' he roared. 'Not loud enough!'

"Now, as it happened, a real and very violent thunderstorm was raging outside and a loud crash of thunder occurred just as Ryder called out 'Not loud enough!' The men above ceased their labours with the cannon balls and rightly decided to leave Nature and her elements outside to do their work.

"Ryder heard the peal. It did not suit him at all. 'Louder! louder!' he called angrily, whereupon a voice from above shouted in an aggrieved tone: 'Beg your pardon, sir, but that was Gawd Almighty.'

"'I cannot help that,' retorted Ryder, with rising choler. 'It may be good enough for God Almighty, but it's not good enough for John Ryder!'"

III

Of this period of pupilage, Martin Harvey speaks with much affection. He loves to dwell upon it. No doubt he was an impressionable youth, and his first steps under the old actor seemed to have printed themselves on his mind. Ryder was of a world apart, into which the young actor desired to enter. He lived also in a world no longer existing to-day—an odd corner of Bohemia that has vanished from the life of the theatre. From Ryder, Martin Harvey says he gained breadth and a simple, direct method of producing effects of great service to him in the later stages of his career. There was much to unlearn, but Mr Harvey is of opinion that, in changing over from the old style to the new, some of the secrets of the fine old fellows who are now contemptuously spoken of as members of the "ranting school" have been almost lost, and might be recovered with some advantage to the histrionic art.

From the moment of his attendance as a pupil of John Ryder's, Martin Harvey began to take the stage seriously. Unlike many aspirants, he had no monetary difficulties. Mr Harvey, senior, was just as keen on giving his son a start as an actor as he had been in preparing him for the profession he had deserted. All he demanded was a sincere effort on the part of his son to succeed in the profession of his choice, and the tyro was increasingly conscious of the expectations he was exciting. His work in the vicinity of the Strand took him amongst theatres and theatrical people, and very quickly he began to absorb the atmosphere of his surroundings. He frequently attended the theatres, and just about this time his imagination, never slow to respond to a suggestion, was deeply stirred by seeing Edwin Booth as King Lear and Othello, two parts which he played with tremendous power.

One last story of this period may be told. Time went on and Martin Harvey began to feel he had learnt all that could be taught by the strictly limited method of reading with an experienced actor. The problem of the moment was how to secure an appearance. While much can be done to teach the would-be actor the details of his art such as elocution or deportment, the real school of experience is the stage itself. After a long course of study with John Ryder, Martin Harvey was growing anxious to see his first engagement, and was prospecting for a chance of employing his untutored talents. He tells the story in his own words.

"As no opportunities presented themselves, I set out to make one. An advertisement in a newspaper caught my eye. It briefly announced that an agent, giving Euston Road as an address, was prepared to teach the whole art of acting and make-up to any aspirant and procure each student an engagement for the modest sum of two guineas.

"To the Euston Road, accordingly, I made my way—my pockets clinking together the two guineas which were to be my passport to the art and mystery of the stage and the privilege of appearing upon it. I found the house, a shady-looking address, and knocked on the door, which was opened by an indescribably filthy servant of uncertain age. I was bidden to walk upstairs, and did so. I was shown into a room which had been used as a bedroom—and at no very remote time. The bedclothes were tumbled about in squalid disorder, and a dirty cup and saucer rested on a chair at the bedside. 'The avenues of my profession are not strikingly dignified or refined,' I remember thinking, with a gravity akin to disgust. Presently I was asked to enter a room adjoining the one I was in, and there sat the man who was waiting to make my fortune. I told him what I wanted; he listened with an affectation of businesslike concern; I paid the fee and arranged for the first lesson; my new friend pocketed the guineas and commenced to instruct me.

"With paint, cotton-wool and all sorts of odd things, I muddled about over the pretence of being taught to make myself up. First I became a decrepit old man, then a dissolute young one. The art of acting was taught by reading from a penny book of plays. I was not greatly impressed but hung on, regarding the possible engagement as important and hoping against hope I should get something tangible for my two guineas. At the end of a short period, I asked my preceptor about the engagement, for which I thought I was ready. He did not turn a hair. 'Do you know *The Era*?' he asked, naming a well-known theatrical journal. I had heard of the paper, and told him so. 'Then buy a copy,' he advised. 'You will see heaps of engagements advertised. Answer them.' That is all I ever got from the magician whose lordly power of procuring engagements was exercised on anyone's behalf from the squalid rooms in Euston Road. This was my first acquaintance with the seamy side of the stage, but it was by no means my last."

CHAPTER VIII

WANTED A JUVENILE—BARROW AND "THE BRIGANDS OF ABRUZZI"—THE LOST COMPANY AND THE STRANDED ACTOR—OUT OF WORK—THE MISERIES OF "RESTING"—MARTIN HARVEY AND THE FRUGALITY OF THEATRICAL PEOPLE—AN INTERVIEW WITH SIR W. S. GILBERT AND A TRIAL RECITATION—WILSON BARRETT AND THE ASPIRANT—AN ENGAGEMENT AT THE COURT—SIR W. S. GILBERT REHEARSES HIS COMPANY—THE UNDERSTUDY'S IMPERILLED CHANCE—PLAYING TO SIR CHARLES WYNDHAM

I

THE student days were over. The long hours of declamation with John Ryder were past. Martin Harvey had been taught at least the rudiments of his profession. It was necessary that he should secure his first appearance.

We left him last after paying two guineas for the purpose of being told to read the advertisements telling of actors wanted in *The Era*. The young actor considered the advice excellent, but very dear at the price paid for it. His friends considered he had been swindled. However, there is a mercurial quality about Martin Harvey which does not allow him to grieve over the past. Having paid expensively for useful advice which any actor would have given him for nothing, he determined to take it. He obtained a copy of *The Era* and read the advertisements. This is the sort of cryptic announcement that met his eye:

"Wanted juvenile for responsible. To dress well on and off."

It is rather interesting to note the first "shop" which attracted the new recruit was that of "juvenile" gentleman. The stage has a technical language of its own, and "juvenile" in the profession does not imply childhood, by any means. When a juvenile actor is wanted for a company, the manager is not looking for an infant phenomenon, but rather for an actor of slight figure who has retained his youth sufficiently to convey the character of a sprightly young man of twenty or thereabouts. There have been excellent "juvenile comedians," playing with all the sprightliness of extreme youth, at the age of seventy.

Martin Harvey apparently selected his place on the stage instinctively. His reply to the first advertisement he answered was prophetic. He remained on the stage to become the most popular juvenile actor of his day, but not through anything that happened in consequence of the advertisement.

"I wrote to the address given," he explained to me one day, as we walked the streets of Birmingham together, during a wintry afternoon. "I wrote, and, of course, I waited. But a few days went by, and at last came the reply. I waved it in the air—it was the open sesame. My advertiser—my manager who was to be—wrote from a small town, on particularly unimpressive notepaper, and in a scarcely decipherable scrawl. He was prepared to engage me for a play called *The Brigands of Abruzzi*, and I was asked to be at Barrow-in-Furness to 'open' on the following Monday. Salary—good but small. To be precise, I was offered thirty shillings per week."

"Barrow-in-Furness, in *The Brigands of Abruzzi* at thirty shillings must not have sounded very inviting," I suggested.

"Inviting—it sounded to me to be the most hospitable attention the profession could pay to me. Why, I was as delighted as you may have been once when some obscure journal printed your first effort after literature."

"There is a thrill in these things," I admitted; "but it is easily lost. Did you go to Barrow?"

"I should just think so. I remember the glee with which I laid these first-fruits—still unripened, of course—before my father. My father was what the Scots call canny. He shook his head and counselled patience. He did not seem to approve of Barrow, but he made his meaning clearer by explaining his dislike of the word 'Brigand' in the title. He seemed to think it sounded sinister."

"Well, did it not?" I suggested, and we laughed as we dodged the traffic in the street.

"Well, perhaps it did," Martin Harvey reluctantly admitted. "My dear old father was often right in those days, although I never realised how right fathers sometimes are until I had a boy of my own. I was young, enthusiastic, and, alas, one has to admit it, with sorrow, a trifle arrogant. Again I discounted my wise old father's opinion. I was determined to try my luck, and being a wise man, he let me have my way."

" How did it end ? " I asked. The sinister word " Brigand " had impressed me.

" Ha ! ha ! " Martin Harvey laughed boisterously, and a passer-by, catching the ring in his arresting voice, turned and smiled in sympathy. " In tragedy and gloom," he continued. " Off I went to Barrow, full of the hope which keeps all workers in the arts alive. I remember the weary night in the train, the jolting, the rattle and the roar of it. I arrived in Barrow, hungry and tired, in the early morning, but still stepped out bravely, with a heart full of hope. As I went along, I searched out the playbills, eagerly. Now, for the first time, I should see my name on a theatrical programme, I thought, as I walked along. To my intense mortification, my name was not in the cast—a damper to my spirits, coming on the top of the long and tiring night journey."

" The Brigand ! " I ejaculated, melodramatically.

" As you say, the Brigand ! " Martin Harvey answered. " But there was worse to follow. I waited about the theatre until it opened, and asked for my company. The elderly servitor who expected them, and was sweeping the passage to the stage, scratched his head and said : 'I dunno.'

And that was the note of the day. No one knew. I never learnt whether anyone ever did know. They never turned up that day. The Brigand was stranded in another town."

"And the rest is silence," I murmured, sympathetically.

"Sadly I pawned my watch," said the actor; "also the chain, and my dress suit—the new suit designed to enable me to live up to the advertisement and dress well 'on and off.' I never lived up to the terms of the contract 'on,' but 'off' was a significant word. Gloomily, I rode 'off' to town the same night, and arrived in the morning—to go to the Strand, an out-of-work actor who had never been employed."

"The Brigand!" I murmured again.

"The Brigand of Abruzzi," Martin Harvey said, in sepulchral tones, and we both laughed.

"These little incidents sound funny retailed many years after, when the world has been more than kind—more than kind," Mr Harvey said gravely, a minute afterwards. "Believe me, they used to be very common—they still happen to-day—and they are not funny, for any of us, until many years after. For some of us, and there is the tragedy of it, these risks are not eliminated—such incidents never become retrospective."

OUT OF WORK

II

Back to the Strand and the hub of the theatrical world came Martin Harvey, and back with him came the old problem—where to look for an engagement. An interview with his father was not too encouraging. Mr Harvey, senior, was not a man of half measures, and considered his son, instead of staying a day at Barrow, should have remained a week, and given the missing brigands a chance of turning up. Inquiry, however, convinced him that the visit to Barrow had taken the prospective career as far as it was ever likely to go in that direction. Martin Harvey, therefore, had to join the ranks of those who wander about the theatrical headquarters, looking for work.

Everyone stricken with the glamour of the footlights should know the agony of mind of the actor when he is, as he puts it, "resting" or "looking for a shop." To Martin Harvey, a youth with an indulgent parent to back him, the search for a suitable engagement meant neither privation nor hardship, no matter how long it lasted. But even at its best, this search for work, long protracted, does mean a thwarted career. Without an engagement, the actor's art is at a standstill, and he is left kicking his heels in the cold Strand, an aspiring artist who cannot practise the profession of his choice. The painter may go on painting and expressing himself—in good times or bad. The writer may go on with the work he loves. Provided the inspiration is there, poverty, or lack of engagements, does not bring either the painter's, or the writer's, development to a standstill.

Not so the actor. To learn his profession he must act, and to establish his reputation he must keep on acting. Gaps between engagements, though they may give time for reading, study and research, are in a measure wasted time. And worse remains behind. Joining the army of those who look for work on the stage, Martin Harvey learned something of its disappointments and still more of its tragedies. The underlying difficulty is, of course, poverty, and while Mr Harvey has not suffered it in its direst degree, he rubbed shoulders with the spectre during those days spent in looking up his first engagements. He learnt much of the quiet, patient courage and devotion of the player of the rank and file. One knows the type of man. He comes daily to the West End, to call upon agents and others who introduce the actor to his work. His faded clothes are well brushed, and his shabby boots are polished, though they are becoming shapeless. His linen, frayed but white, has been carefully laundried by a devoted wife, cheerfully working away in some jealously guarded home of two or three rooms, in the shabby-genteel districts of inner London. Martin Harvey learnt to picture that home, with the actor fruitlessly searching for work, his carefully hoarded savings diminishing day by day. The day comes when he walks to save his 'bus fares, and the brave little wife faces the necessity of carrying on the small domesticities by parting with their joint wardrobe, item by item. Knowing so much of this, it is not remarkable to find Mr Harvey always ready to listen sympathetically to any public claims made upon him to further theatrical charities, the value and necessity of which he is always advocating, in season and out.

"It is a point of view you might emphasise," Mr Harvey said, dwelling on these first struggles for the right to practise his profession. "The people who throng towards the stage only see its attractive side. They should understand the care, the misery, the privation which ever dogs the footsteps of the capable player—troubles intensified for the younger man. People say actors are improvident," he continued. "Why, they are the most frugal and careful people I have ever met. They want so little out of life, beyond employment in the theatre. When times are good and engagements are long ones, as a class they save regularly, and save a bigger proportion of their incomes than most people. The poor actor has two problems before him, in his economics. He cannot lay money away for his old age unless he is lucky. Long before he has the right to think of providing for his old age, he must be concerned about making provision for the accidents of his profession. He is always saving when employed, and yet he rarely possesses funds for his old age. A long rest will dissipate the scanty savings of years, and when he goes back to work the business of frugality begins again, and he has to make provision for the next and ever-threatening rainy day. No one is happier than the actor with regular work. He saves for the rainy day, and also for the worse spectre looming behind—the period of old age, when his talents are enfeebled and his charm begins to fade. The average actor has but few extravagances. He is content to do his work and to husband his resources, and, after the work is done, a simple meal and a chat with other friends who do the same work, are nearly all the pleasures he expects from his leisure."

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III

"While I searched London for an engagement," Mr Harvey explained, recalling his first steps towards the stage, "I thought of the promise made to me by Sir W. S. Gilbert. Gilbert had recommended me to Ryder, and had promised, after my period with the coach, that he would again see me for the purpose of learning whether I was cut out for the work. Shortly after I came back from Barrow I remembered this, and decided to write to the dramatist. Mr Gilbert's answer was prompt and encouraging. He wrote suggesting I should come down to the Opera Comique and recite before him."

I pressed for a complete history of this early adventure, which Mr Harvey was kind enough to recall.

"I went down to the Opera Comique, in fear and trembling," he explained. "Gilbert had already laid the foundations of his great reputation, and was by now a figure in the theatrical world. It was a typical and gloomy November morning. The approach to the theatre lay along a number of narrow streets in a district which has lately disappeared. It will be remembered by Londoners as being in the neighbourhood of Wych Street. The way did not look particularly inviting in the prevailing fog and gloom. I found the stage door and sent in my name, and Mr Gilbert came to me. He was the first man to take me actually on the stage, for I had never been 'behind' up to that day. Gilbert piloted me through what seemed to be a hollow, reverberating hole, and we emerged, two shadowy figures, in an open space easily recognisable as the stage. My first glimpse of a stage was the most gloomy and depressing sight I had ever seen.

"The theatre was quite dark. No daylight seemed to enter it. As a matter of fact, there was precious little daylight outside. The stage was lit by one T light (gas), and was entirely empty. There was nothing to be seen except the bare galleries of the theatre, the upholstered seats being draped in dust cloths. The silence was broken by our footsteps and voices, and by the movements of shadowy figures in the gallery engaged in cleaning. My surroundings, and the errand I had come upon, had turned me clammy with perspiration. I was in a dreadful state of that kind of funk which one describes as stage fright later on in life."

"What happened?" I asked curiously.

"Well, Gilbert was most kind. He tried to set me at my ease, but that he could not do. In that gloomy place, feeling very much like a nervous ghost, I recited 'Pitt's Defence of his Youth,' an odd effort to choose for such a purpose. As I did so, I grew frightened at the sound of my own voice. Gilbert, I remember, stood near the T gaslight, holding my book containing the passage close to his face."

"Was he enthusiastic?" I prompted.

Martin Harvey smiled.

"I do not think I impressed him very much. He watched me with twinkling eyes, and advised me, early in the reading, not to move my arms about as if they were ducks' wings. Almost all beginners self-consciously keep their elbows stuck to their sides and move only the lower parts of the arms."

"Was that all he said?" I persisted.

"At the end of the reading he said, in his brusque, military way: 'Yes, oh yes, that is all right. I should go on.' Knowing Sir W. S. Gilbert as I did later, that is all I could have expected him to say. He was not the sort of man who is prone to paying florid compliments, and the 'Yes, go on' he gave me was quite enough coming from the great humorist."

"And nothing happened?" I suggested.

"Nothing whatever, except a very turgid recitation delivered on a very dark stage that no longer exists to an empty theatre long since pulled down."

"And did this lead to an engagement?" I asked.

"Well, I went back to Ryder for a time, as Sir W. S. Gilbert's manner suggested I needed further experience. While with him for a second period, I commenced my search for an engagement. Ryder was very nice about the matter. He told me one day that Wilson Barrett was going to put on a new play at the Princess Theatre, and advised me to go and see him. He gave me a letter of introduction, and off I went. Wilson Barrett received me with a very charming manner, in his dressing-room, but had nothing to offer to me himself. He told me of a new play they were putting on at the Court Theatre—a play called *Honour*, and very kindly introduced me to Captain Claremont, who was running the season at the Court. As a consequence, Captain Claremont gave me my first engagement."

"Was it a good one?" I asked.

"Well, it turned out to be in the end, although at first my prospects did not appear so bright as they promised to be in *The Brigands of Abruzzi.* In reality, I was engaged to walk on with others as a guest in a reception scene. I had just to look natural, and I think we guests also did a little waltzing. For that I was paid a guinea per week. John Clayton was the manager and Dion Boucicault was stage manager. I remember amongst the guests who walked on was Eric Lewis, whose distinguished work on the stage has made for him crowds of admirers.

"Well, though engaged as 'walking gentleman,' I had a little stroke of luck. In addition to *Honour*, there was a revival of Tom Taylor's farce, *To Parents and Guardians*, with Arthur Cecil and H. Kemble in their original parts. As it happened, during the run young "Dot" Boucicault was not able to play, and his understudy had to go on in his place. The understudy played the small part of a boy in *To Parents and Guardians*, and the reshuffling of parts made it necessary for the management to give me the boy's part. It was but a small part. I had to appear in a Kate Greenaway costume, with a concertina-like hat, making my entrance with a wild war whoop. This was my first part, and I distinctly recall how the war whoop died into a sort of death rattle as I made my first appearance before an audience, in a frenzy of stage fright. Still, I got over that, and I think John Clayton was satisfied with my playing. It was a part at any rate, and for the moment I was satisfied, but I did not forget I was only playing the character by accident and that, at any moment, my part was likely to be taken from me. Though a small part, I did the best that was in me, and it led almost immediately to better work in the most curious manner."

IV

"When the piece had been running some time, I was still dissatisfied," Mr Harvey explained, resuming the narrative a few days later. "Every day I expected my part to be taken from me, and that I should be dethroned from my much-prized position as an actor and relegated to the ranks of the walking gentlemen. I tried to anticipate this by looking for another part, and I went again to Sir W. S. Gilbert. He was then at the Criterion, rehearsing *Foggerty's Fairy*, a venture which did not succeed. I sent in my card, and he asked me to come into the theatre and see a bit of the rehearsal.

"I think," said Mr Harvey after a pause, "attending the rehearsal was one of my most delightful experiences up to that time. Gilbert was a splendid stage manager, and to see him at work was a great opportunity for a keen youngster. He had everything he wished to do in his mind—movement, grouping, expression and gesture. In this respect he resembles another great stage manager of his own dramatic work of our day—Sir Arthur W. Pinero. But the delight of watching Sir W. S. Gilbert rehearse was to enjoy his ever-bubbling wit. His remarks, as he drilled the company, formed a sort of verbal firework display, and all the time he scarcely smiled."

"But surely he was conscious of the effect?" I suggested.

" Oh yes—no one more so. He would shoot out a sparkling dart of fun almost thoughtlessly, but I noted always he looked round slyly to see whether it winged its way to a sympathetic hearer. He liked to see his shafts of wit appreciated, I think.

" The important point in my history is that at this interview Gilbert introduced me to Sir Charles Wyndham. So far as I can recall it, the incident happened very casually. During an interval, Gilbert took me forward and called the attention of Sir Charles to my presence.

" ' Can you give this young shaver anything ? ' he said to Wyndham, with a laugh.

" Sir Charles looked me up and down carefully, and then asked what I was doing. I told him of my engagement at the Court with a great deal of pride, particularly of my chance appearance as understudy. Sir Charles Wyndham had appearently something he thought he could give to the ' young shaver,' and said he would come round and see me play.

" I remember I left the theatre treading on air. ' What a chance ! ' I kept repeating to myself, and then I got to the Court only to receive a bolt from the blue. Dot Boucicault came back to play his part that very night, his understudy reverted to his original work, and I—I, of course, dropped out of the farce and into the ranks of the walking gentlemen. The bottom tumbled out of my world in a minute."

" And was that the end ? " I asked.

" No—that was not the end. I had been good friends with the actor whose part I had played temporarily, I told him my secret and my disappointment. Together we arranged that we should approach Mr Clayton and ask his permission to allow me to continue in the farce for one more night. Oh! what a fever of excitement I was in. The word had gone round that Sir Charles Wyndham was in the house, and everyone was agog with interest and pleased at the prospect of playing to such a distinguished critic. As luck would have it, John Clayton was late. I waited and waited for him at the stage door, already dressed, and the time went on. Only a few minutes remained before the curtain was due to go up. At last he came, and I and the other youth made our requests, hastily and somewhat incoherently.

"John Clayton—the kindest of souls—seemed a little dazed, but he got a grip of our meaning at last, and gave his consent. I went on in the boy's part and the situation was saved for me. It was my first chance and I nearly missed it, but by the time the farce had run its course I had the satisfaction of knowing I had played to Sir Charles Wyndham, and the great man asked me to go round to the Criterion and see him immediately. With that call began another important incident in my career, and, as you see, it was a close call indeed."

CHAPTER IX

AT THE CRITERION—SIR CHARLES WYNDHAM'S MISSING BOOT—A PROVINCIAL ENGAGEMENT WITH A CRITERION COMPANY—THE THREE-POUND-A-WEEK SALARY—WHAT IT WAS EXPECTED TO DO AND DID NOT—ACTORS YESTERDAY AND TO-DAY—THEATRICAL LODGINGS OLD AND NEW—DUMAS IN GLASGOW—THE RETURN TO TOWN—BRAM STOKER HOLDS OUT A HOPE —" DEAR OLD LOVEDAY "—A SUPER AT THE LYCEUM

I

No sooner had Martin Harvey completed his own work, on the night of Sir Charles Wyndham's appearance at the Court Theatre, than he hastily dressed and made a quick journey to the Criterion Theatre. Sir Charles had only stayed to see the one-act play, *To Parents and Guardians*, and having fulfilled his purpose, which was to see Mr Harvey play the boy's part, he hurried back to make his own appearance in the evening bill, in the more immediate West End.

The actor manager's work for the evening was over when Martin Harvey arrived, and the younger actor was received by Sir Charles Wyndham, in his dressing-room. Mr Harvey has an odd recollection of that interview. When he was shown in, Sir

Charles, so familiar to us all as the gracious, courtly man of the world in many a successful comedy, had lost one of his boots, and, having lighted a piece of paper at a candle on his dressing-table, was down on his hands and knees, searching for it in one of the dark corners of the apartment. Under these conditions the interview took place.

The interview in the earlier part of the day had been opportune, for Sir Charles Wyndham had a part in his mind for the young actor. He had lately sent out a company to play a farce in the provinces, which had not been very successful. To eke out this tour, the Criterion manager had decided to revive a farce called *Betsy*, in which play there is a fine boy's part. When produced at the Criterion, *Betsy* had a very successful run, largely owing to the hit made by Lytton Sothern.

When Sir Charles had retrieved his boot, he proceeded to the business of the interview, which was the question of engaging Martin Harvey to go out to the provinces and play the part of the boy in *Betsy*.

The engagement was made quite casually. As Sir Charles Wyndham removed the traces of his evening's employment, he explained that the matter was only a question of terms.

"I had decided to ask for three pounds," Martin Harvey tells you. "It was an impertinence," he adds, with a laugh, "but when Sir Charles asked 'How much?' I named that figure."

Sir Charles Wyndham offered two pounds per week, but his visitor stuck out for three pounds. Eventually, the latter sum was agreed upon, and Martin Harvey walked out of the theatre with his head in the air—an actor engaged to play a part for the first time with an appreciable salary. To explain the sense of exaltation obsessing him over this dizzy success, Mr Harvey admits he took a hansom to the station—an unusual extravagance for him in those days—and even went so far as to offer an extra fare to the driver if he caught the train. The memory is imprinted in his mind owing to the fact that the cabby, bent on earning the double fare, ran down a drunken man who stepped off the pavement in Coventry Street. When the actor stepped out to give assistance, the man swore so volubly, and with such picturesque and unusual imagery, that the actor was only too glad to get back into his cab and continue the journey to the station, if anything faster than ever, so as to get out of earshot of the rising stream of abuse.

These were great days for Martin Harvey. After receiving his call to Barrow, as a principal, he had secretly resented the necessity of taking an engagement as walking gentleman under John Clayton's management. And now here he was, with a part—a principal part; a successful actor with a salary of three pounds per week. Lytton Sothern coached him in the part, and in due course he asked for his release from the Sloane Square management. "By all means, my boy," was Clayton's godspeed. *Honour* was a failure, and doomed, so Martin Harvey

Count Skariatine

("A Cigarette Maker's Romance")

Photograph by McMichael, New York

was lucky in his chance engagement, and left the company with the envy of all his colleagues who "walked on"—two at least of whom are successful actors to-day.

The scene of the young actor's next effort was Newcastle, where Sir Charles Wyndham's company was due, and to the city on the Tyne Martin Harvey journeyed to take up his part. He tells an odd story of that first experience of touring.

"You may guess how fresh I was as an actor when I tell you my only idea of living in a strange town, on my arrival at Newcastle, was to put up at the best hotel. It never occurred to me that my three pounds per week would not go as far as I desired it to. I am afraid I had a singular lack of knowledge of how far money would go. During that royal first week, I put up at the Station Hotel. I was, I think, the wonder and admiration of the tour in the eyes of the rest of the company. I fancy they thought I was a titled amateur. But the end of my brief splendour came with a hopeless crash. When I received the bill at the end of the week, my salary would not meet it, and the hotel people would not let me go without paying in full. If the manager of the company had not advanced me another week's salary, I am afraid I should have been there, in pawn, until this day."

II

"I am afraid I was a very raw young actor in those Newcastle days," Mr Harvey confessed, one day. "I fear, too, that I was a somewhat impossible youth. I think my rehearsing reduced the stage manager to despair. I had not acquired the trick of the light modern school of acting, the touch-and-go manner of Criterion farce. I was bent on coming out strong on the lines of the old school—in the Ryder way, grave, ponderously grave and massive."

We laughed together over the picture—Criterion comedy in the manner of the stately, legitimate school which dies hard, even in our own day.

"I am afraid I must have been very silly," Martin Harvey said slowly. "*Betsy* was a gay, irresponsible farce, as light as a feather. There was a situation in which I, as a very high-spirited boy, had to kiss the conventionally drawn widow of farce. It was conceived in the true spirit of French farce, but at rehearsal I had no idea of playing the incident in the same manner. I certainly kissed the widow, but not in any way did I realise the spirit of the play. My idea was the grave, dignified, respectful manner—the kiss of the old school, inspired by a lofty passion. We tried that kiss several times. The charming lady who played the widow told me to give her a hug and a kiss and get the scene over. But somehow that kiss was a stumbling block. The stage manager almost tore his hair with despair, and at last cried to the stage, the actors, and to me: ‘Ye gods, he kisses her as if she were his grandmother. Have you never bussed a chambermaid? Do it that way and let's get on.’

“I remember I felt very nervous, very out of place on the stage,” Mr Harvey concludes the tale of these, his first rehearsals as an actor, as distinct from a student. “I tickled the stage manager almost to the point of death by my mannerisms, and he had his work cut out to get me away from the Ryder methods. I think I must have been over-anxious to please, for the stage manager, during one of these desperate rehearsals, was obliged to turn round to the company and admit, if I was not much of an actor of farce in the French manner, I was at least letter perfect.”

Of this tour Martin Harvey tells pleasant stories. He tells of the first salary he drew. After he had been paid, Alfred Maltby, the manager, asked him what he was going to do with himself. Harvey did not even know, and said so. Maltby's reply was: “Why don't you go over and see the boys? They are all at the Turk's Head.”

“I did not know what the Turk's Head was, but went over, and found it to be a comfortable hostelry in which most of the male members of the company were assembled for convivial purposes.”

“It is not long ago,” Martin Harvey said, referring to this type of professional gathering of the past, “but in that short time the habits and customs of the theatrical profession have entirely changed. In my very young days, actors spent much of their leisure in the taverns. They were an isolated class, and had to depend largely on their own resources. Theatrical apartments were not so good as they are to-day, the club system had not developed to any great extent, while golf and athletic pursuits were scarcely ever mentioned in travelling theatrical society. One's hours of leisure were spent over gossip and whisky, in such friendly hostelries as the Turk's Head."

I agreed with the actor's opinion. With some little knowledge of the ways of travelling players, any observer will have noticed the change in the habits of the profession during our own day. To-day, the actor of established position does not frequent the taverns. He is no longer isolated, but, on the contrary, is welcomed as a temporary member of local clubs. Most of all, the average actor has succumbed to the attractions of the open air. When companies travel many men, football, hockey, and cricket teams are organised, as well as rambling and field clubs. Golf has also bitten the theatrical profession badly. One can now scarcely join a company which has not its little coterie of players, and some put up a very hot game indeed. The actor, as a golfer, is proud of his geography. The nature of the work on tour makes it possible for him to play on most of the representative courses in the British Islands.

These days gave Mr Harvey also his first experience of theatrical lodging-houses. With the passage of time, theatrical apartments have greatly improved, but actors still say there is room for further betterment. After playing for a week, the company went on to another town, where the management had contracted to play another farce. As there was no part for Martin Harvey in this farce, he remained behind for a week, in Glasgow.

" Waiting the return of my fellow-players was one of the most dismal weeks I have ever spent," he told me. " I put in an entire week there, in an autumn of perennial rain, and spent the whole of the time in my rooms, reading Dumas. I was glad when the company returned to Glasgow and I could resume my part. Theatrical lodgings in those days were often poor and frowsy, dirty, and generally very dreadful, and to spend any length of time in them without any company at all was a trying ordeal. The chief characteristic of the lodgings of my day was the welcome one received on going into the rooms. On the first day, there was always a bright fire, and dinner was usually carefully served. The fire grew less bright as the week progressed, the linen faded, the cooking became worse, and the service constantly deteriorated. And yet, after all, theatrical apartments ought to be much more comfortable than they are. It is so little theatrical people want—a piano, clean linen, and an easy-chair."

The story of his first tour is easily told. The awkwardness of rehearsals soon wore off, and the young actor played his part on the opening night fairly well. Both the local management and the directors in town were satisfied with Martin Harvey's work, which, when it received attention in the press, attracted favourable notices.

Martin Harvey sums these early days up in his own phrases. "I felt quite at home by the time I was called upon to play, and, after the first days of rehearsal, lost my self-consciousness. I was pleased to have a part and a salary. I liked the company of players, especially Old Will Hill. He was a great favourite, and a delicious comedian; a huge pear-shaped man, with an enormous face and a pendulous chin, a great body and ridiculous little legs. It took me all my time to play my part with him without laughing. He was such an extraordinary character, and such an unctuous comedian. I liked also the conditions under which I had to work, and at that time I had no views either on acting, the art of the theatre, or its literature. My outlook was neither complicated nor critical. I am afraid I was just a boy, with no artistic outlook, dreams, or thoughts of the future. I had just what I most desired—change—and pursued the great adventure of life with no thought of the morrow."

From this easy attitude of life, Martin Harvey was soon shaken by the hard logic of events. When he joined, the tour was within sight of its end. When the company returned to Glasgow, *Betsy* was played there a week, after which they all returned to London, and presented the farce at Shoreditch. That was the end of the tour. When the Shoreditch week was over, the company dispersed. On the Monday morning, Martin Harvey set out for the Criterion, hoping, with all the optimism of youth, there would be something for him to do. This time the Criterion was inhospitable. There was no work to follow the tour. After playing a few weeks, Martin Harvey was back in London where he started—an inexperienced actor out of work. His first engagement had ended, and with it ended his first salary as an actor—that noble three pounds per week—after he had drawn it five times.

III

Martin Harvey had left the Court and gone to Newcastle, in the firm belief that his theatrical fortune was made. If it were so easy to get three pounds per week, he argued that a progressive future on much more roseate lines was just as easily possible. A vista of brilliant engagements, to follow the slight success in Criterion farce, had already outlined itself to his soaring mind. Martin Harvey, in that five weeks of touring in the north, conquered the world of the theatre with his mind almost as lightheartedly as Kipling accused his fellow-countrymen of killing Kruger with their mouths.

Alas, the reality was a somewhat rude awakening. After the rocket had soared, it descended ingloriously. Martin Harvey returned to town full of hope, but day by day his steady fund of optimism diminished. Again he had to join the ranks of unemployed players, and for eight long months remained with them. Followed, the usual reading of theatrical papers; the writing of letters; the calls on agents and managers; the long periods of waiting at stage doors. He ransacked London for promising letters of introduction, and followed each prospect up tenaciously. Absolutely nothing turned up; nor at the end of the period was an engagement in sight. It is as well for those who look upon the stage as a delightful and easy way to competence, to remember these nightmare gaps. Speaking of this period, Martin Harvey recalls how his spirits sank as the months slipped by one by one until they were at zero. No one seemed to want a young actor of little or no experience, and he grew so depressed in the end as to believe his theatrical career was closed.

Behind this depressing cloud appeared the silver lining. It occurred to Mr Harvey that a friend of his family, Mr E. J. Broadfield, so well known in connection with educational work in Manchester, knew Sir Henry Irving, and through him he obtained a letter of introduction to Mr Bram Stoker. Bram Stoker, as everyone knows, was Irving's manager and confidant throughout the better part of the great Lyceum chief's career, and in the theatrical world, when the Irving management was at its zenith, had something of the power of an ambassador.

"Armed with this introduction," Martin Harvey tells you, "I went off to see Stoker, one evening, at the Lyceum. It was my first meeting with the brawny, red-bearded Irishman, whose personality seemed to fill the whole Lyceum with energy and activity. It was by no means our last meeting.

"Bram Stoker talked to me in very strong terms and straight, and indicated plainly that actors of my experience, or lack of it, were not in great request at the Lyceum. He held out some hope, however, and passed me on to H. J. Loveday."

Everyone who has known anyone connected with the Lyceum management has heard of the name of "dear old Loveday." "Dear old Loveday and the Lyceum" are thoughts which go together in the minds of theatrical people. I have pressed many workers who knew the Lyceum to explain exactly what Loveday was. The answers are always vague. He was a sort of a stage director, but not quite that. He was a sort of a manager, but not quite that either. He sometimes becomes, in these conversations, a sort of manager and stage director, and yet not both, but always seeming to be a little more of the one than the other. And then sometimes he becomes, in the descriptions of my friends, "a sort of an acting manager behind, if you can follow me." The more inquiry is made the more confusing the opinions become. Whatever position H. J. Loveday's admirers choose to give him, only one opinion is expressed about his personality. "Dear old Loveday" tells the whole story. He was apparently the most loved man at the Lyceum. I had heard so much about him, and it had always differed to such an extent, that I had begun to think he was a beautiful tradition—a sort of benevolent Mrs Harris.

"Who was H. J. Loveday?" I asked Martin Harvey, bent on collecting another opinion.

"A dear old friend," was his prompt answer—"a dear old friend. One of the sweetest and most amiable personalities I have ever met—one of the kindest-hearted men who ever lived.

"Dear old Loveday!" Martin Harvey said, pursuing his recollections. "He had a place in the Lyceum theatre which was not clearly defined. Without him, I sometimes think the Lyceum could not have gone on so well as it did. The aloofness of Irving, the atmosphere created by his stern criticism, all had peculiar effects on the nervous, excitable temperaments of many men and women engaged in an emotional profession. It seemed to be Loveday's mission in life to smooth away the rough edges, to unravel the tangled skeins of frayed tempers, to pour oil on the open wounds.

"Well," Mr Harvey continued, when at my request he resumed the narrative so far as it leads to the beginning of his association with Sir Henry Irving, "Bram Stoker sent me to H. J. Loveday—dear old Loveday! That was the first time I met Loveday. Young as I was, and somewhat overawed by the atmosphere of the Lyceum traditions, I felt I was in the presence of an old friend at once.

Years only deepened that impression. I began an acquaintanceship that day which ripened into friendship and remained unbroken to the end.

"He was very kind—but then he always was kind, to the youngest recruit, or the oldest stager. He gave me the impression that if I joined the Lyceum company it would have to be in a minor capacity indeed, and that I would have to take my chance of working up, if I showed any considerable ability.

"When my engagement materialised into terms of business, I was engaged—as a super. After eight months of idleness, spent in chafing, waiting, and hoping, I obtained an engagement—as a super."

I can see that young actor now nursing his damaged pride and slowly recovering his self-respect. Barely out of the impressionable period of youth when life is revolving round one's own ego; after those wonderful weeks in the north as an actor, with a part and a salary—that roseate present leading to a still more radiant future—he had to learn his lesson. The way to achievement is the road of experience, beginning at the beginning and traversing every step. Martin Harvey had tried to find a short cut, but Fate seized him by the ears, turned him back, set him on the long and lonely road, and made him walk each step of the difficult path. His career began as a super at the old Lyceum. Looking back at what then seemed to him a tragic humiliation, Martin Harvey will tell you that engagement as one of the Lyceum young men was the best thing that could have happened to him.

CHAPTER X

THE LYCEUM TRADITION—SIR HENRY IRVING AND HIS COMPANY—TWO KINDS OF SUPERS—ACQUIRING THE ART OF ACTING—A BRILLIANT PAGE—LOVEDAY AND THE WIGMAKER—A PLAYER OF MANY SMALL PARTS—THE WONDERFUL FEATHER AND THE CROCKETED MOUSTACHE—LEARNING TO WALK—A FIRST INSTRUCTION FROM SIR HENRY IRVING

I

MARTIN HARVEY is the first to admit that he began the serious business of life as an actor at the Lyceum Theatre. He will tell you, as he has told everyone, that he owes his enthusiasm for the work he does, and much of the technical equipment which has enabled him to pass into the front rank of representative actors and to remain there, to the example of the great head of the Lyceum Theatre. The merest stranger who hears Mr Harvey talk is not left in doubt of the leading influences in his life. On the side of Martin Harvey's personality which is concerned with acting as a means of expression, one man has left an indelible impression—Sir Henry Irving. The Lyceum traditions largely influence Mr Harvey's actions in problems of professional conduct; they certainly inspire his enthusiasms, and colour and revivify an insatiable desire to achieve and to excel. The life and work of Sir Henry Irving made many impressions on many minds. To-day, years after Martin Harvey's association with the Lyceum Theatre, he speaks of the opportunities presented to him there with gratitude, and of the influence of the personality of Sir Henry Irving in terms which can only be described as having in them the quality of veneration.

Martin Harvey went into the Lyceum Theatre as a boy who had adopted a career on the stage, lightheartedly, because it promised adventure. He came away from the theatre a finished actor, with considerable achievements standing to his name. Moreover, he came from the Lyceum with a technical equipment he could not have acquired anywhere else in the world, and a consuming desire to use it. Two great influences were working on Martin Harvey's personality at the Lyceum. He had daily opportunity of watching the greatest master of stagecraft in the world going about his life-work, at a period fertile in achievement. Last, and more important still, he absorbed the lesson, for the truth of which Sir Henry Irving stood out nobly as the greatest living example—the lesson which teaches pride in the work to one's hand as indispensable to considerable achievement. Martin Harvey will tell you how mere contact with Henry Irving—the aloof, austere despot of the Lyceum—stirred his dormant temperament and fired within him the ambition to excel. He caught from Irving that tenacious enthusiasm for all concerning the actor's art which holds the artist steadily on his course and makes him aim always for higher endeavours. At the

Lyceum, he learnt the patient devotion to an ideal which enables a man to be cheerful in performing apparently meaningless drudgery and giving wholehearted service under discouraging conditions. From Sir Henry Irving, Martin Harvey learnt the inner meaning of Carlyle's definition of genius, and acquired the capacity for taking pains. The purpose of the actor took on a deeper significance when inspired by the Lyceum traditions. Martin Harvey began to see the work of the theatre, to which he had turned so lightheartedly as an art, demanding the best the actor can give of himself.

All this sounds very glorious, but the actual acquisition of the outlook was not by any means gained by following a primrose path. Players were not petted at the Lyceum. Martin Harvey began as a supernumerary, and at once had to shed his notions of what he conceived to be the actor's calling, and become a part of the Lyceum machine. Sir Henry Irving was a great actor, but he was a still greater manager. He built up the Lyceum company as a vehicle organised to express his great personal sense of the theatre, and senior, or junior, parts of the whole had to adapt themselves to the conditions set up. After soaring for a few weeks as the complete actor, Martin Harvey had to forget himself and become a unit in the Lyceum corps, ready to respond to the will of the creator of the machine—a human item in the many resources which enabled the Lyceum management to fill the stage with entrancing pictures. He had to begin at the beginning and to work upwards, step by step, under an exacting manager, who had scant respect for the foibles of sensitive aspirants, and a personality overshadowing any living worker in the theatre. Martin Harvey went through years of drudgery before he obtained anything like a tangible opportunity, and the virtue he had to practise most of all was a self-restraint amounting to self-abnegation.

In these early years, there was not much of glory ; the little money available was only earned by very hard work ; the progress was so slow that only the enthusiast would have gone on. But for the self-discipline implied by starting on the lowest rung of the Lyceum ladder, and working to a point where one became a valuable part of the great manager's artistic scheme, Martin Harvey gained one privilege. He had the opportunity of inspecting at first hand Henry Irving's methods, not only as an actor of genius, but as a manager with the power to blow on the same spark in others and to secure their best effects. Sitting at the feet of Irving, in those days, was to learn from a master all the knowledgeable craft of the theatre of that day.

At the Lyceum there were two kinds of supers. The ordinary super of the stage, everyone knows. He is a man who follows one or more activities and turns to the stage door for auxiliary income. He is not fired by any desire to play Hamlet, nor does he aspire even to such small parts as the rendering of the classic phrase : " My lord, the carriage waits."

The super proper is prepared to take a costume and wear it; to shout with a crowd, or walk in a procession as unobtrusively as possible, and to draw, for this service, the standard rate of pay given for each performance. He is usually selected from the army of small wage earners, and is the patient, willing drudge who helps to fill out all the big spectacles. Of this class of super, there were many on the theatre's books.

There was also another class of super at the Lyceum. Attached to the theatre was a number of students or enthusiasts for stage work, known in the theatre as "Lyceum young men." They made up a small body, so far as numbers were concerned. Members of this little army of young men were supposed to be ambitious students, adopting the stage as a profession and anxious to gain experience in its most elementary form. They undertook the same work as supers proper, and to all intents and purposes were supers. They were, perhaps, given the work demanding the most intelligence from the super class, and were looked upon as being a little more responsible, and perhaps as slightly more presentable than the average hired man. When the work of the supers included several small parts, these were allotted to "Lyceum young men," as were most of the parts which isolated a super or brought him into special prominence. The Lyceum young men formed a well-recognised institution, and there was a greenroom in the theatre set apart for their use. Of this little company of minor actors, Martin Harvey formed one. Little did he dream that the engagement made almost in despair, to tide him over a wait between engagements, was to remain unbroken for fifteen very fruitful years.

II

These days at the Lyceum were rich in experience and rich in story. The difficulty of the writer is to compress the record of these fertile fifteen years into anything like manageable form. Of the Lyceum period, Martin Harvey loves to talk. I have sat evening by evening with him, in his home, or journeyed with the actor up and down the country, on his constant professional tours, and our talk always comes back to the Lyceum days. So much happened there of importance to the subject of this book. He was a young man, eager, curious, enthusiastic, standing on the threshold of life. A great art suddenly unfolded all its magnetic charm. As an actor, Martin Harvey's first conscious steps were taken on the Lyceum stage. There he may be said to have acquired the art of walking, and, finding his feet, finally surprised himself in the possession of the secret that he could stand alone. Friendships crowded into his life—association with men following the same profession. Life was in the chivalrous stage of youth, eager for company, prepared to pool its common hopes and enthusiasms and ready for friendship fired by the spirit of emulation. In those days, also, Martin Harvey developed a great personal admiration which led in the end to a lifelong partnership. A charming woman came into his life, impelled there by the camaraderie of the theatre. Alone, of the Lyceum tradition, she remains, the partner in his work, the heroine of his plays, the wife and charming hostess of his home, and the mother of his children. On this last relationship has been built all the years of advancing effort, and from this foundation springs much of the secret of his inspiration. All these are separate and important developments of the actor's life coming into it at the same point—those years at the Lyceum.

Young, eager, enthusiastic, on the threshold of life, we have also another phase of Martin Harvey of this period. He was at the age when youth chooses objects for its worship. Not over-burdened with cares, possessing no record of personal achievement, he had time to look outside and find an object which embodied his aspirations. He desired to succeed on the stage, and was in daily contact with the most splendid figure gracing the theatre of that day, ranking, as Irving did, with such historic heroes of the stage as David Garrick or Edmund Kean, in dignity and achievement. When Martin Harvey talks about the Lyceum, the figure of Henry Irving looms large in his recollections, and stalks with a mighty sweep across the crowded canvas. No estimate of Martin Harvey's attitude to life would be complete without pages devoted to his personal drawings of Irving, as he saw him. Out of this welter of interests, out of these crowded years, it becomes difficult to draw together the incidents which form complete or coherent narratives. To attempt to tell the whole story in one single narrative, would be to achieve a crowded mosaic without any meaning in the pattern, however interesting its separate elements might be. The only way to visualise for the reader what life at the Lyceum meant for Martin Harvey, is to separate the interwoven stories. I have therefore decided to complete this chapter by briefly surveying what Martin Harvey accomplished at the Lyceum Theatre as an actor. Then, dealing with the same period, I hope to give the actor's impression of his great chief and the many interesting personalities who were about him—to re-create, if possible, the wonderful atmosphere of the Lyceum, in its greenrooms, and behind the stage. Last, from this company, making history in the gloomy theatre now existing only in name, so far as the Irving tradition is concerned, we will pass to one other figure—a player of small parts, picked out from the crowd who peopled *Much Ado About Nothing*, and followed the fortunes of Benedick and Beatrice—a brilliant, little, feminine figure, a pert and saucy page, who swaggered in a suit of red, wore a feather jauntily stuck in her hat, and tripped in the train of Benedick, displaying a fascinating pair of top boots. Odd to remember to-day that the head wearing the cap with the challenging feather—one ripple of very human beauty on a stage overwhelmed with oceans of colour—held a busy brain, nervously alert, though it animated that girlish, irresponsible figure, in which was simmering the germ of Martin Harvey's most successful play, *The Only Way*.

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III

When Martin Harvey joined the Lyceum company, what he did not know of the art of the actor would have filled a text-book on the makings of a successful player.

"I did not know how to put on a wig," he told me once, in one of our earliest talks of the Lyceum days. "I did not know how to drape a cloak about my body. As Irving knew the art of acting, I doubt whether I could walk across the stage properly. I remember my first appearance was in *Much Ado About Nothing*. I was given my dress and left to make myself up. I knew so little about it that the result must have left me an appalling figure of fun. I was on the stage with the rest of the company, but Irving's eyes, which saw everything, undoubtedly singled me out. When the act was over, dear old Loveday took me aside, called up the wigmaker, and fumed over my ridiculous appearance. He demanded to know from the wigmaker why I had been allowed to go on and make such an absurd sketch of myself. That was my earliest recollection of playing at the Lyceum."

Apparently there was plenty to do on the Lyceum stage in this production—even for supers. In the first act, Mr Harvey was a warrior in the train of Don Pedro, and a very fiercely moustached warrior too. In the second act, he appeared as a simpering gallant attired in light blue, tripping a pavane in the house of Leonato. In the third act, Martin Harvey became a musician, touching lightly the strings of a lute, and with his back to the audience, while Mr Jack Robinson as Balthazar sang " Sigh no more, Ladies." In the fourth act, he became one of Dogberry's intelligent watch and apprehended the villainous Borachio. In the beautiful Cathedral scene, where Claudio launches his terrific charges against Hero, Martin Harvey was again the light blue gallant, now no longer simpering but simulating surprise and horror. In the last act, Martin Harvey mourned at the sepulchre of Leonato, and then, hastily changing, resumed the light blue trunks and followed once more in the train of Benedick and Beatrice.

Mere supers' parts, all, but the making of these, and many such appearances, disciplined the young actor. " In the groundwork of my art," says Mr Harvey, " Irving taught me all I know. I learnt to move my limbs about as if they were limbs and not pieces of wood ; to face the audience with ease and composure ; to get my voice out when shouting or speaking in the crowds. All the time, I was in an atmosphere of devotion to the work in hand, where the dominating conviction was the belief that everything was worth doing well—even the work of a super. Irving knew the technique—the elementary foundations of the work of an actor—better than any man I have ever met, and he could impart what he knew. More, the effect he desired had to be obtained, and that was an end of the matter. In common with all the 'Lyceum young men,' I had to do the work, and in the process I gained a tremendous lot of experience. When I came away from the Lyceum, I had acquired the technique, which prevents an actor from being caught out by a lack of knowledge of his work."

On this side of the work of the young actor, Mr Harvey is especially enthusiastic. He claims that much of the art of the actor—all of it short of the inspiration of a peculiarly sympathetic temperament—can be taught. Mr Harvey is much more illuminating when using his own phrases. "It seems an odd thing to reflect, remembering Irving's strange mannerisms, that behind them he had the wonderful mastery of technique which is expressed by the slightest movement of a hand or foot, the subtlest inflection of the voice, or even by a mere movement of a muscle of the face. Acting, so far as its technique is concerned, is a matter of self-control—control over voice, mind, nerves, muscles and limbs. All these are brought into play by the actor, are vehicles of his expression used by him just as a painter employs his paint, brushes and canvas to express his meaning. To lack this control, the elementary technique of the work, is to handicap any career upon the stage. To learn these simple elements of the art, over and over again, by the actual drudgery of doing the work on the stage, goes far towards making at least the competent actor. I need hardly say how important it was to me to begin at the beginning under a man with a genius for his art, who knew every single possible effect obtainable, and would not let the most careless super scamp the most trivial detail."

That the super was getting keener on his art is proved by a story which Mr Harvey likes to relate of the run of *Much Ado About Nothing*. The idea of being a super was still rankling in his mind, and he hailed with delight an opportunity which gave him something like an isolated entrance. Martin Harvey was selected to play attendant to the messenger, who, it will be remembered, has a delightful scene with Beatrice, brief as it is, in Act I. This, of course, was something in the nature of an unambitious opportunity. At least, Martin Harvey was the third figure on the stage, and although he had no words to speak, he spent considerable time in thinking out a method of making the silent attendant a still more conspicuous figure.

"I bought a remarkable feather," Mr Harvey explains, in telling this story, "from a shop in Holborn, and wore it in my hat, and on the day of the dress rehearsal, I remember painting on my face a very elaborate crocketed moustache, belonging more to the seventeenth than the sixteenth century. Alas, my efforts were unavailing. When the scene was taken, I suppose I must have come shambling on, and was, I expect, in Irving's critical eyes, again a figure of fun. I know when I came on with the attendant, Irving pointed his lean forefinger at me, and with that dreadful preliminary 'Ha-hem!' of his, growled, 'Take out that boy!' I was taken out forthwith, and my great opportunity vanished, for I had to come in with the crowd as usual. That was the Irving manner. I remember, about the same time, I must have been slightly out of place, for the well-known Irving voice rapped out: 'Don't stand there—get back; get back. You are like a cabbage in the foreground of a beautiful landscape.' All this to the sensitive and inexperienced player was very humiliating, and at first it hurt me very much. I remember, however, that though I lost the part, I still retained the feather, and my wonderful, beautifully painted crocketed moustache. I recall, to this day, how I used to be chaffed as I painted it on, with the loving touches of an artist elaborating a masterpiece, each evening in the dressing-room."

In those early days, Martin Harvey often evoked the attention of the "Guv'nor's" lean forefinger and the lash of his critical tongue. He tells the stories of those very early days, with whimsical affection for his wonderful, but exacting, chief. "And anyway," he will add cheerily, for it is the actor's philosophy, "I lived down those days. Perhaps because I came there through an old friend; perhaps because Irving thought of his own crude effects in the early staggering days; perhaps because I was no worse than the average conceited and self-conscious novice, as long as I kept myself inconspicuous, I was retained. All the while I was learning something, and correcting old faults. I began to wear my clothes without becoming the figure of fun—the target of the ominous lean forefinger. I discovered the trick of putting on my wig without appearing to be the kind of figure John Leech introduced into his comic 'History of England.' I *did* learn to walk instead of shambling like a loutish schoolboy, and to get my elbows away from my body. And almost every night I absorbed a useful lesson in the art of making quick changes."

IV

A year of this kind of gruelling work laid the foundation of competence, and Martin Harvey began to show glimmerings of being a possibly efficient actor, even to the stern martinet of the Lyceum. At the end of the season, came rehearsals and revivals of a series of plays which Irving had decided to include in his repertoire for America. These included *The Merchant of Venice*, *Louis XI.*, *The Bells*, *The Lyons Mail*, *Much Ado About Nothing*, and *Hamlet*, and about the same time the plans for the American tour were divulged.

" As soon as it was understood by the company that Irving was going to America," Mr Harvey explained, " everyone began to speculate wildly as to whether he would be in the company or not.

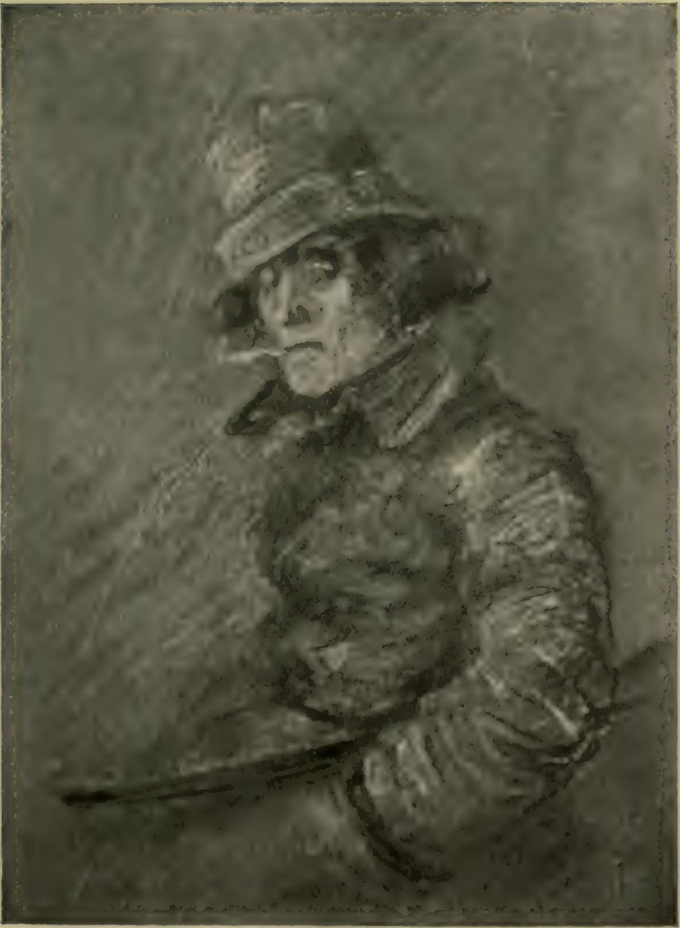
Naturally, my disastrous experiences up to that point did not hold out much hope for me, and I remember the state of mind I was in as I debated the question: who was to go and who was not to go. How I idolised an old Lyceum actor, Jack Archer, who in one of the discussions gave it as an opinion that I should be one of the company to go. It was small enough hope; nay, it was hardly a foundation on which to build hope at all. But as events turned out, I was chosen, and to make the prospect more uproariously delightful, I heard the same morning that Miss de Silva, the pretty page with whom I was by now head over ears in love, was to be a member of the same company, in what was to prove a memorable journey for us both."

From this period, Martin Harvey began to be of some account in the Lyceum company. When rehearsals began, a small part was allotted to him in *The Merchant of Venice.* " I had four lines to say," Martin Harvey told me, " four lines, as Balthazar, a servant. Genial, ever-buoyant William Terriss was very good about the four lines. At a rehearsal, still a little awed by the Lyceum surroundings, I spoke the lines badly. Terriss, with his ever-ready good nature, called me aside. 'I'll tell you how to do it, young 'un,' he said, in his breezy, soldierly, slapdash manner. He stood there, threw out his chest, and rolled the words out in his infectious, ringing voice, and I imitated him as nearly as possible. When the play got to the dress rehearsal stage, I spoke my lines as nearly in the Terriss manner as I could. I got through satisfactorily and played the part. This time," Martin Harvey concluded, thinking no doubt of the early attentions of Henry Irving's eloquent forefinger, " I was not cut out."

Fortune began at least to take a kindly interest in Martin Harvey from this moment, if she did not exactly smile upon him. Preparing for the American tour, Sir Henry Irving allotted this particular young man a part in *Louis XI.* of an old villager who comes in and prays to be allowed to see his stricken child. " At all events, the part represented a line or two," is Mr Harvey's comment, " and they were not cut out." When *Hamlet* was cast, at the last moment, another opportunity presented itself. Irving introduced into the Court scenes the figure of a jester, and Martin Harvey was chosen to represent him. The jester had a little business, which consisted of capering for the amusement of the Court, pointing out the moody Dane, and making some remark about him which drew the laughter of the guests. In the preparation of this part, Martin Harvey drew his first direct stage instruction from Sir Henry Irving. Irving was concerned about Harvey's expression, and, in a second, his face changed from that of the grave chief of the Lyceum, directing his forces, to that of a clown full of humorous puckers —the kind of jovial devil one finds in the stained-glass windows of the twelfth century. " This way, this way, me boy," Irving explained in his quaint staccato manner, and immediately the puckers faded from his face and in a second he relapsed into the stern, aloof æsthetic of the Lyceum.

V

Such then was the life of the player of minor parts under Henry Irving, and from these incidents one may judge of the forces at work, shaping the young actor's destiny. It is easy to see why Martin Harvey venerates the memory of Sir Henry Irving, the "Guv'nor," who introduced him to acting as an art, and made the tyro work at it—set his nose at the grindstone and imparted sufficient movement to the wheel to make the friction painful. Henry Irving prevented him from walking before he could stand, from running before he could walk, from leaping before he could run. And he made the tyro work. A rough process, calculated to rub the bloom from illusion; to raise wounds and reopen them; to give a Spartan touch to memory itself. When the actor could walk the stage, he was given a line to speak. When he could speak lines, he obtained small parts. When the small parts were well played, better parts were allotted. In short, the A B C of the profession was the thing Martin Harvey took from the Lyceum. He went into the theatre a clever, high-spirited, and sometimes very foolish boy. He came out of it a man devoted to an art, and a polished actor. Few thought in those days, least of all Martin Harvey, that the foolish boy would, a very few years later, take over the management of the same theatre, under the lesseeship of his old chief.



Irving in "The Lyons Mail"

From a Pastel by Martin Harvey
in the possession of Charles Hughes, Esq.

CHAPTER XI

MARTIN HARVEY'S RECOLLECTIONS OF IRVING—FIRST GLIMPSES OF THE LYCEUM CHIEF—THE HOLY TRINITY—IRVING AND HIS HATS—A FRIGID ATMOSPHERE—SIR A. W. PINERO'S CALL—IRVING, TOOLE AND THE EVANGELIST—A GREAT TEACHER—MARTIN HARVEY'S LESSON IN LAUGHTER—IRVING AND THE STUPID ACTOR—MRS HARVEY AND THE PEARS—LAST DAYS OF THE LYCEUM GLORIES

I

I KNOW of no more delightful experience than the hours I have spent with Martin Harvey, listening to his recollections of the late Sir Henry Irving. The theatre-going public of Britain and America sat at Irving's feet, fascinated and faithful to the end of his career. I made one of that public in the later years, and it is a regret of my life that the man capable of weaving such wondrous spells remained, so far as I was concerned, a name on a playbill and an actor behind the footlights. Irving was the type of man whom people desire to know. My knowledge of Irving outside the theatre was practically nil. True, I saw him at one or two public functions, rendering his carefully prepared speeches with an artistry few could detect, and once or twice I was in the same room with him for an hour or two.

When I came to London, Irving's star was setting. The glories of the Lyceum had faded. Richly gilt, the old theatre had commenced a new career in another world, Irving had become a wanderer with no dramatic home, and afterwards the great actor only made fitful appearances in town.

An hour or two with Martin Harvey makes Irving live again. I remember the evenings through which we discussed Irving, because they gave to me something of the opulence one might have by owning a theatre, choosing the play and a popular actor, and sitting, the solitary occupant of the stalls, to enjoy the result. My stall was a comfortable arm-chair on most of the occasions, though sometimes it turned into a seat in a car or a train. The play was Irving—a personal drama, moving enough to suit the most exacting, and my leading actor was indeed well chosen—Martin Harvey. Martin Harvey makes Irving live, with a gesture, an unstudied walk, a flick of the fingers, or a few spoken words. The Lyceum period saturated the actor with Irving recollections and impressions, and he recalls them at will, reproducing the very atmosphere with the aid of the actor's art. Every word Martin Harvey speaks of Henry Irving, is a loving tribute, beautifully expressed, to the memory of a great artist.

When we came, in the course of making this book, to the Lyceum period of Mr Harvey's life, I pressed for a full chapter about Henry Irving which should begin with the first impressions formed by the newly joined "super" of the dominating personality at the Lyceum. For the set purpose of securing this chapter, we had many meetings and many talks. The result of this contact with the Irving atmosphere, left me at least feeling as if I had served in the old Lyceum company. Dealing with Martin Harvey's deliberate creation of the personality of Henry Irving, presents not a few problems to the writer. To make even one man's memories of Irving live, needs the colour and sound of a voice, the emphasis of facial expression, the illuminating influence of characteristic mannerisms, and many odd tricks of gesture. The interest of Irving's personality lay in his manner and method, rather than in the spoken word. Apart from the fact that Irving was a force, the charm of his personality was its flavour—a subtle, reserved humour, half genial and half sardonic, which went hand in glove with a wonderful face, an acrid note in the voice, a gleam from a mocking eye, and an emphatic movement of an eloquent hand.

" My first sight of Irving in his daily habit was during the rehearsals of *Romeo and Juliet*, in the early days of my engagement at the Lyceum," Mr Harvey told me. " I can see him now as I saw him then. Everyone was assembled on the stage at the Lyceum, ready to begin, and Irving strolled in leisurely fashion from his office. Loveday walked on one side, Bram Stoker on the other—the Holy Trinity, as they were often called. Irving was wearing a brown hat with a wide brim. I think I realised then his singularly strong personality. I recall his pale face, with its wonderful eyes, always so self-possessed; his long, loose limbs, which seemed so ready for action even when in repose; and his eloquent hands, the fingers almost like the talons of a bird. His long, black hair lent a great deal that was characteristic to his appearance, as also did his habit of standing with one hand in his pocket, bringing one shoulder higher than the other.

"Of course," Martin Harvey explained, "as a member of the company, I soon became used to the appearances of the Holy Trinity. They meant, as a rule, one thing—work. I mention Irving's soft hat because it had a special significance. Indeed, Irving's hats formed a sort of barometer—they indicated the temperature of the theatre and the kind of passage the company was likely to make. Irving had three hats, and the appearance of each carried a definite message to the company. The soft felt hat, with the wide brim, meant a stiff day's work, and a stiff day under Irving was a stiff day. A hard felt hat affected by the 'Guv'nor' meant a moderate day's work. A top hat—this very seldom, by the way—was the most welcome sight of all. Its appearance meant we should certainly be let off very lightly, and quickly dismissed."

The secret of Henry Irving's hats was never explained, I may add. One actor inclined to this view, the other, to that. Some of the opinions expressed were wildly absurd. Probably Mr Harvey's explanation is the simplest and the best—that the hat was chosen to suit the engagements of the day. The silk hat meant a social function, which arbitrarily timed the movements of the actor. The felt hat possibly indicated Irving had engagements with intimates, or associates, during the day. The soft hat undoubtedly meant that Irving was free, and ready to make a day of it. When the big day's work in the theatre was in his mind, the soft, broad-brimmed brown hat was on his head.

"Indeed," Mr Harvey added, pursuing his recollections of the hat, "Irving's clothes were always characteristic of the man. No one ever wore a top hat quite like Irving's. He had his own way of having his cuffs cut, and he always wore the same type of shoe—of a soft material, narrow and pointed, and always partially covered by a black spat.

"The atmosphere at the Lyceum was not very encouraging," Martin Harvey told me, one day. "The whole of the company were somewhat awed by the personality of the 'Guv'nor.' Irving was a lonely man, and very much aloof. I do not think he desired to create this frigid atmosphere, but he could not help it. Many times I have seen him attempting to break through the atmosphere he had unconsciously created. A group of players might have been standing about the stage, talking in the cheerful and sometimes boisterous manner we often have, and apparently gaining no end of amusement. Irving would come along in his half-shy manner, as if he would like to join in the fun. Sometimes he would stop and speak, but as sure as he passed or stopped, the little group would subside into silence—

an awed silence. And, mark you, there was nothing repellent in this. It arose out of the man's complete absorption in his work. He had the aloof brain.

"Terriss—William Terriss—was a man Irving liked. Most of your readers will remember Terriss, the valiant hero of melodrama, and a great romantic actor. He had a breezy, boisterous manner, a charm of address, which was always about him, in or out of the theatre. He was one of the few men who could joke with Irving. William Terriss, however, was the kind of man who stood in awe of no one, and he filled the theatre when he was about it. But the man who always broke down Irving's aloofness and austerity was Loveday—dear old Loveday. Irving had no armour against him. They understood each other. Irving loved old Loveday and Loveday gave to the chief the same regard. In the hard atmosphere of the Lyceum—sometimes it was even bitter—Loveday's place was to correct and soften the impressions glowering about the place. He smoothed things down."

II

"Life at the Lyceum was, as Mrs Harvey once described it, rehearsal, rehearsal, and more rehearsal. Everyone was kept steadily at work, and very frequently rehearsals were called which were not particularly essential, so far as the actors were concerned. A large portion of the time on such occasions was taken up by discussion with Mr Arnot, the property man, or with scene painters. Sir Arthur W. Pinero, when a member of the Lyceum company, is said to have put up a satirical call: 'Twelve o'clock—Mr Arnot to drive a screw into the flat, and principals and everyone concerned in the production to see him do it.' Calls at the Lyceum were punctually obeyed by members of the company. The system of fines was then dying out, and Irving, I think, did his best to kill it. The concluding lines of the regulations governing the conduct of actors were: 'There will be no fines. Mr Irving trusts to the *esprit de corps* of his company to see his wishes are carried out.'

"Irving had everyone's devotion, because everyone felt he was engaged in good work. I remember once that Irving called a rehearsal on a Sunday—the necessities of a new play making the departure from an unwritten law necessary. One of the members refused to attend, giving as his reason that Sunday work was against his religious scruples. Irving turned to Miss Terry, and said: 'Why should not a man work on Sunday, if it is necessary? I look upon this as good work, and see no reason why a man should not do good work on Sunday.'

"Irving was not a church-goer," Mr Harvey went on, pursuing the train of thought aroused by the foregoing story. "He had been trained by an old aunt, in Cornwall, under deeply religious influences, and though he did not attend church, he had strong underlying religious feeling. I remember, in this connection, a story told of him at Brighton. It was

Irving's custom to run down on the Sundays and spend the day with perhaps his most intimate friend —the late J. L. Toole. Irving and Toole were driving along the King's Road at noon, just at the moment that a well-known local preacher of the evangelical and somewhat intolerant type was addressing a small crowd of people. Irving desired to stop and hear him, and their carriage was pulled up. Both the actors listened quietly, but the preacher seemed to consider their presence an opportunity. He began to direct his sermon at Irving and Toole; to indulge in a somewhat puritanical and perhaps tasteless condemnation of actors, and the work of the stage as an employment leading straight to the devil; and to picture a God condemning all associated with the work of the theatre to horrible torments. Irving listened quietly for some time, and at length entered into discussion with the preacher. He summed up his own point of view in his characteristic manner. 'You know, my boy, you are quite wrong. Your idea of God and mine are quite different. I look upon God as a God of mercy!' Irving drove on."

III

"In the theatre," Martin Harvey said, speaking of the Lyceum chief as a manager, "Irving was a great teacher of technique. No one could teach better than Irving, if the actor were prepared to take a lesson. Many people with him were not prepared to learn, and did not. I have seen Irving teach a man how to play his part, and in doing so hold the whole company hushed and on the verge of tears. I have heard the same man, after the rehearsal, turn to his fellows with no more to say than, 'The old man is very tiresome this morning!' "

How little the value of this side of Irving's work was realised by some of the company, is shown by another of Martin Harvey's anecdotes. "I remember him laboriously trying to teach an emotional part to a wooden actor. Irving kept giving beautiful little studies illustrating the effect he wanted, but the actor remained as wooden as ever and scarcely responded. After illustrating one of these emotional passages time after time, spending effort on the task, and ending by nervously exciting himself to a corresponding degree of emotion, Irving began again. 'Can't you do it, my boy—can't you do it? This way, my boy—work up the emotion this way!' Then Irving read the passage as it should be played. 'Feel it; imagine the situation for yourself, my boy. I am sure you can do it!' As Irving finished his explanation, the tiresome actor called his attention to a smut upon his face. Irving looked at the wooden actor with profound dismay, and closed the book with a snap. Almost despairingly, he turned to Loveday with a shrug of his shoulders and said: 'Good Lord! all he says is there's a smut on my face. Ah! well; go on, my boy; go on.' He never tried to teach that man again!"

"At rehearsal, Irving was wonderful," Martin Harvey explained, with the profound admiration of a man who knows something of the problems of stage direction. "He would come down to the theatre with the whole scheme of the play in his mind. He would act all the characters—voice, gesture, and gait—one after the other. He knew where everyone should be and how he should look. One moment he would be a hulking brute in face, figure, and the inflection of the voice; the next, he would take the bauble from my hands and become at once, for my improvement, a fantastic, mediæval folly. He would reproduce an emotional effect with exquisite ease, and then become at will a grotesque figure of fun. And all the time he was the character, and the observer forgot the real truth—that he was looking at an angular man in very commonplace modern, walking attire, drilling a company of players.

"'Laugh, my boy,' he said to me once," Mr Harvey explained, to illustrate Irving's knowledge of technique. "'Laugh, my boy—a hearty laugh—ah—come now!' I laughed—the sort of laugh one might expect from a dying rattlesnake. 'No—no—no; that's nothing like a hearty laugh. Can't you—ah—laugh, eh?' I said I thought I could. 'Then try again!' Irving suggested. I tried again, with increasing nervousness, and failed. 'No—no—no! this way, my boy. See—deflate your lungs—so; then throw back your head and laugh!' and Irving, suiting the action to the words, filled the theatre with rollicking laughter. I deflated my lungs and laughed. It is quite easy, and ever since then I have known how to laugh. Try it for yourself!"

I tried. With deflated lungs, if you try to make a noise, you must laugh.

"That was Irving's way. He not only knew the effect he wanted, but he could explain the physiological causes. A valuable lesson in the art of laughing, I considered it. You say, how simple, and so it is. But Irving could do that sort of thing a hundred times in the course of a morning, and give you the practical physical basis for securing the effect. And in rehearsing, he would patiently repeat the illustration, becoming and ceasing to be the character quicker than you could put on or take off a glove. 'My God!' I remember him saying, when I had been excessively stupid. 'My boy, you ought to be paying *me* for teaching *you*, instead of expecting *me* to pay *you*!' And he was quite right," Martin Harvey concluded, grimly.

IV

Irving was a lonely man, and had few intimates, but he had a very tender side to his character of which glimpses were given. Mrs Harvey tells one delightful story of this angle of Irving's attitude to life. She and another girl, playing a similar minor part—they were little more than children at the time—had a somewhat long wait, and in this wait they contracted the habit of slipping ulsters over their costumes and running out of the Lyceum stage down to Covent Garden Market, where they bought "speckled." When Mrs Harvey told me this story, I am afraid a somewhat blank expression showed I did not grasp what "speckled" really meant. Mrs Harvey will tell you that it is a pear with speckles on its otherwise blooming contour, and that speckles are as much a drawback to the appearance of a pear as freckles are to a beautiful complexion. Anyway, in the pear market, "speckled" go cheaper, or did in Mrs Harvey's days as a minor member at the Lyceum.

One evening the two girls, coming from their nightly raid on the pear market, were caught by the wardrobe mistress. In answer to the stern question, "Where have you been?" the handful of speckled treasure from the market was displayed. The wardrobe mistress considered the breach of discipline of sufficient importance to report to Sir Henry Irving, and the "Guv'nor" announced his intention of seeing the two delinquents. This, of course, was worse and worse. As a rule reprimands for these small offences were passed on through other channels; that Irving considered the matter an incident with which he should deal, personally, struck terror into the hearts of the small pages. Off they went, like prisoners to an execution, to Irving's dressing-room. "Absent from the theatre—ah! where did you go?" he asked, looking very grim. Again the offending "speckled" were displayed, and the cause of the absence was once more explained. They waited in great agitation for the sentence. "But it did not come," Mrs Harvey explained, "all he did was to take hold of my hand and gently ruffle my hair. Then he gave us each a box of sweet biscuits and a new sixpence and sent us away!" There was no wigging.

Martin Harvey doubts whether Irving gave anyone his complete confidence—unless it was given to the dog, Fussy. Fussy was a fox terrier, and, of course, could not talk. It was given to Irving by Ellen Terry, who acquired it from Fred Archer, the jockey, and Fussy became his master's constant companion and the object of his solicitude. Ellen Terry says that Irving has been discovered at his evening meal, with the dog perched on a chair opposite to him, both gazing at each other in an orgie of mutual admiration. When Fussy died—the dog fell through a trap in Manchester—the Lyceum cat adopted Irving, and the chief took kindly to his attentions. Martin Harvey tells how every night a certain quantity of milk had to be purchased and put on a table in Irving's dressing-room. During an interval, it was Irving's custom to himself give the milk to the cat. When Irving's long tenancy of the Lyceum came to an end, all knew the reign was over, but Irving went on just the same. He made no mention of the impending severance from the theatre in which he had done the greater part of his life's work, although the iron must have entered his soul. He went about his work just as he had done so many evenings, finished his part, walked to his dressing-room, and prepared to leave the theatre. The only direct reference he made to the end came as he fed the cat with its nightly allowance of milk. As he rose to go, he looked over his shoulder, and, speaking to someone by his side, said: "I wonder who is going to care for my cat." It was removed, with the rest of the properties from the Lyceum, the next day.

Yes—Henry Irving played a great part at the Lyceum. He ran a great national theatre single handed, and failed—gloriously. His life was given unsparingly to the theatre; he scarcely lived outside its walls, and when he died, Irving had just completed his last day's work. For a space of fifteen years, Martin Harvey had the privilege of watching Irving as actor, stage manager, and producer. Those fifteen years meant much to the young actor. They gave him a wonderful technique and the versatility which is only built on a fine technique. They gave him a sense of the theatre, and, in after life, the power to handle men as a manager, in his turn. From Irving, Martin Harvey developed the instinct that makes it possible, not only for a man to conceive how a play should be produced, but to handle highly intelligent and sensitive people in a way that enables the actor manager to ensure the dream of an artist shall take shape and body on the crowded stage. The facts are all in Martin Harvey's phrase: "Irving taught me all I knew when I went into management for myself."

CHAPTER XII

THE LYCEUM COMPANY—EVERGREEN HOWE AND KEAN—OLD HOWE AS A GARDENER AND SIGHTSEER—WILLIAM TERRISS AND THE EMIGRANT—SAM JOHNSON IN AMERICA—A LATE NIGHT AND ITS RESULT—THE ABSENT-MINDEDNESS OF TOM MEAD—MARTIN HARVEY AND JACK ARCHER—ARCHER'S IMITATION OF THE MONKEY—MRS STIRLING AS THE NURSE—THE DISAPPEARANCE OF THE GREENROOM

I

Stories of the Lyceum company exist by the hundred. Sir Henry Irving drew many men about him of marked individuality—actors in the flower and in the bud. It was the custom of the actor manager to draw temporary support from the outside during his London seasons, choosing actors who were in the flower. Amongst the notable actors who graced the Lyceum stage in Martin Harvey's day, many already had a world-wide following, while others had won their spurs and left the Lyceum to make great reputations elsewhere. These were but stars passing through a phase, and as a rule were only temporary members of the Lyceum company. Amongst notable names that readily occur to the memory of those who are familiar with the history of the Lyceum are Sir George Alexander; Sir

A. W. Pinero, who was some time a member of the company; Mr Forbes Robertson, and the ever-regretted William Terriss. At the Lyceum, Sir Henry Irving was the fixed star, and his triumphs were shared by Miss Ellen Terry. Though budding actors might change, and did, after the first few years of the Lyceum management, the great heroines of Irving's plays were created by only one actress—a lady who is with us now, and has certainly had no rival on the English stage in her own day. The artistic partnership of Henry Irving and Ellen Terry, through those fertile years at the Lyceum, made theatrical history very rapidly, and it is doubtful whether such a dual personal triumph can be paralleled in the records of the English stage.

An actor's recollections of the Lyceum company, as he saw it, when one of the rank and file, must always return to memories of the established company. Though important engagements were made, temporarily, for the purposes of the season, Sir Henry Irving's company remained for many years much the same in its personnel. He liked to be surrounded by men he knew, and preferred old, familiar faces to new ones. Thus, while important players came and went, the company scarcely changed; and responsible parts were taken, almost to the end, by men who had been with Irving throughout his career as a manager. Of these members of the Lyceum company, Martin Harvey likes to talk. They were all men of pronounced individuality, accustomed to the ways of the chief, who by long association had absorbed something of the Lyceum character, which became an intrinsic part of their own personal make-up.

"There was Howe, for instance," Martin Harvey will tell you. "'Evergreen Howe,' we called him—he was a venerable old man with white hair, and a most interesting link with another generation. He had seen Kean act, and gave very startling imitations of his methods. By listening to clever Old Howe, one realised what Kean's methods were. All actors adore the personality of Kean, and are more interested in him and his doings than perhaps in any other figure of theatrical history. Howe's imitations were delightful to me, as a young actor, for you could catch from him some conception of the intense vitality and dramatic grip of Kean's declamation.

"Howe told good stories of Kean. As his venerable appearance suggested, Old Howe was a Quaker, but his thoughts turned towards the stage. He went to see Kean at Richmond and explained his desires. Kean listened more or less patiently, and Howe used to deliver his verdict, imitating his manner. 'Why, Cockie, you are a Quaker—eh ?' Kean said. 'Yes,' admitted Howe. 'And you want to go on the stage, do you—eh ?' Again Howe admitted the justice of the estimate. Kean turned to him, in his inimitable way, and asked: 'Well, Cully, can you starve ?' 'Not an encouraging suggestion,' Howe used to add, 'but Kean knew something of starvation as a passport to the stage,' he used to conclude, grimly.

" Old Howe looked more like a venerable country gentleman than an actor, and he no doubt maintained the atmosphere by sticking to mother earth many hours a day. He had a charming old cottage, and an acre of ground attached, with lawns, alleys, arbours, and delightful views everywhere. Indeed, he laboured hard there, and achieved wonders. He was perhaps prouder of his garden than anything, and loved to show his flowers.

" As an actor, he had some quaint tricks of speech. One of his odd boasts was to speak of his career before he joined the Lyceum. 'Yes, my boy,' he would say, 'I had an engagement before this—it lasted forty years.' From a new-comer this produced a gasp of astonishment, but the statement was true. He joined Buckstone at the Haymarket, and under various managements remained there for forty years—the span of many a man's working life.

" Beyond gardening, Old Howe had another great passion—sightseeing. He was a great collector of new places, and gave me a love of the same pursuit. Every Sunday, when engaged in London, it was his custom to go out to the country, walking many miles, and he loved to make his way to some delightful, out-of-the-way inn for lunch or dinner. On many of these pilgrimages, I used to go with him—he was fond of young men, and liked their company on his walks. When I knew him, he was getting too old to go very far, but he would travel a few miles, have lunch, followed by a short sleep, and then continue his walk. He gave me my first introduction to Chester. 'Liverpool is a grand place to get out of,' he said one morning; 'let's go to Chester!' We did, and for the first time, under his pilotage, I walked round the city wall.

"Howe's passion for sightseeing was his end. One American tour included New Orleans. Howe had never seen this city, and, in spite of all remonstrances from his family and friends, would insist on undergoing the fatigues of the American tour. He was already beginning to fail, and waiting for meals and trains, and the interminable journeys undermined his health. He died during that tour. He used to say to me, 'I don't mind a bit when the end comes, for I've had a damned good innings.' And he had a good innings," Martin Harvey added, reflectively; "if ever a man had a good innings, it was certainly Howe—Evergreen Howe."

II

"I remember much of Terriss," Martin Harvey said, speaking of the men he had known the best in the Lyceum company. "He had been everything —midshipman, engineer, tea planter and horse breeder—and was certainly the breeziest actor of his day. With his slapdash, hearty manner, he carried something of the manners of the sailor into the theatre. He filled the theatre, and almost everyone worshipped him. Terriss was literally adored by the younger men, and went out of his way to be amiable to them.

" One time, when the Lyceum company was on tour, I went to London for the week-end, and, coming back, Terriss turned up at the station to catch the same train. We travelled down to Liverpool together. Terriss, in his hearty, expansive, cheerful manner, soon began to talk, and quickly had the whole carriage spellbound. One of the travellers was a young man, and he and Terriss had a long talk. The youngster was going out to Canada, ' to try my luck,' as he explained it. Terriss was immensely interested. He had been there, and knew all about it. He gave the lad some good advice, and as we got out at the Liverpool station, offered his hand, which held two sovereigns, to the young emigrant. ' Let's hope they will bring you luck,' were the words accompanying the gift. That was Terriss.

" On our first American tour, Terriss was with us. A journey to America was considered to be a grave adventure in those days. Terriss came down, and with him came his old mother, to see her son off. As we drew away from the landing-stage, Terriss, hanging over the side of the ship until his mother was out of sight, waved his hat to the loved figure on the landing-stage. I thought of this incident years after, when he had become the most popular hero of melodrama in London. He used to wave his hat in the *Harbour Lights*, exactly as

Count Skariatine and Viera

("A Cigarette Maker's Romance")

Photograph by McMichael, New York

I had seen him do it the day we sailed on our first American tour."

III

According to Martin Harvey, Sam Johnson and Tom Mead were two very delightful figures in Irving's company. In the earlier days, Sam Johnson had been of assistance to Irving. When Irving made his first appearance, in Sunderland, he had not found himself, and was rather a grotesque failure. Johnson was a member of the same company, and possessed some influence. When Irving failed, Johnson interceded with the management, and as a result of his intervention the awkward actor was given another chance. This kindness Irving never forgot, and when he became a manager Johnson was offered an engagement, and was with Irving almost to the end.

"An extraordinary man of exceptional appearance was Sam Johnson," Martin Harvey said, in passing his old colleagues at the Lyceum under review. "He was, of course, the acknowledged Shakespearean clown of his day, and became a sort of tradition within a tradition. His Dogberry and Launcelot Gobbo were in the very best style of Shakespearean clowning, and his gravedigger in *Hamlet* was also a memorable performance. Though a man who never drew a large salary, his native Scotch frugality had its reward. He could not be tempted into anything savouring of a desire 'to cut a dash'—always stopped at modest hotels or apartments, and walked from and to the theatre instead of taking a cab. By husbanding his resources, he was able to retire on a modest competence.

"Many good stories were told of him. In America, particularly during the earlier tours, hospitality was showered on the members of the company. Johnson enjoyed it to the full. On the last night of the tour, and the eve of sailing, the festivities were so prolonged that, when Johnson came to the docks to catch his ship, he found there was no ship. The boat had sailed without him. Another time, when leaving America, the same festive tendency caused Johnson to fall and cut his nose very badly. He wore plaster for the remainder of the voyage. L. F. Austin, Irving's secretary, a delightful writer of the light *causerie*, and a great raconteur, conducted a mock trial, and Johnson was arraigned for damaging the ship.

"Frank Tyars, one of the most versatile actors ever associated with Irving, and a prince of story-tellers, Tom Mead, and Johnson were great sitters up. One night in the hotel, retiring to bed very late—perhaps rather early in the morning would be more correct—they all went to the lift together. The door to what Mead mistook for the lift was open, and he walked through it. The lift was not there. Mead walked into space and disappeared down the elevator shaft. Tyars and Johnson turned pale with fright as they thought of the tragic possibilities of the situation, but they were a trifle reassured when Mead, apparently settling for the night, sleepily called out 'Good-night, boys, good-night,' still apparently in the best of convivial humours.

" Tom Mead was a fine old fellow. He had a most magnificent voice—beautiful beyond words. To hear him use this organ in the ghost scenes was an experience to be remembered. Himself, he was a man of extraordinary appearance—thin, cadaverous. He had long, streaming, yellowy-white hair, the colour of an unearthed Pharaoh, which gave him great dignity. He was something of a poet, and wrote passable verses, but he was very much more of a painter. His water-colours were very charming. Mead was also an omnivorous reader, and a very well-informed man. He made a great reputation in Iachimo, the heavy part in *Cymbeline*; he was a wonderful ghost in *Hamlet*, and he used to play Irving's father in *The Lyons Mail.*

" He had one great peculiarity which gave much delight to the company, although it sometimes irritated Irving. He was very absent-minded, and sometimes—indeed often—rolled out his splendid words perfectly when his mind was wandering. There is a scene in *The Lyons Mail*, in which the guilt of the son becomes clear to the father. The old man urges his son to commit suicide. The son protests he is not guilty. One night Mead spoke the father's lines, which many will know, with obvious absent-mindedness :

" ' They have not seen you as I have seen you, a pistol in one hand, a dagger in the other and in the other——' Mead stopped with the third ' other,' still absent-minded, but beginning to recollect himself.

" ' And in the other ? ' Irving insisted, under his breath. ' And in the other—say it, my boy, say it. And in the other—a broomstick.'

" Another good story is told of Mead's absent-mindedness. He entered a Strand public room, and found there a man he desired to meet. He went up to the man, and, after professing a desire to know him, began : ' My name is——' and stopped there. Turning to a fellow-member of the company, he asked for help. ' By the way, Lowther, what is my name?' He had forgotten it.

" Another story of Tom Mead. In the same house, while discussing a glass of grog, a man came up to him. ' I say, Tom,' he said, ' do you remember on such-and-such a date you lent me half-a-crown ? ' Mead's answer was very non-committal ; he feared another application. ' I've been waiting to pay you that half-crown ever so long,' the man went on, and placed a coin on the counter. Mead looked at it in some surprise. ' Ah—humph ! ' he began, clearing his throat carefully, and looking at the half-crown, ' I never expected to see you again.' ' Well, bigad ! you sha'n't be disappointed,' the debtor replied. Suiting the action to the word, he promptly picked up the coin and replaced it in his pocket. Mead never saw it again."

IV

"When I travelled up and down to school at King's, I used to see an old fellow using the same trains who interested me very much. Though I had never known an actor, and had not thought of the stage, my instinct told me that this old man was a player. He always wore a very carefully brushed top hat of an old-fashioned cut, and an equally well-brushed frock coat. I don't know how one singles out an actor from all men, but I fancy it is by the quick, alert look which constantly comes to those who, by the nature of their occupation, make humours of all men. Shakespeare knew them well enough. You remember Hamlet's advice, as he dismisses the player, 'Look you, mock him not.'

"Well, he was an actor, right enough—you could not place him anywhere else. I never spoke to him in those early days, and never knew him, beyond seeing him travel home by the afternoon train. When I went to the Lyceum, almost the first man I saw was my old friend of the train. He was old Jack Archer. Archer was with Irving fully twenty years. He was at the Lyceum long before I joined, and was there long after I left. On one occasion after I went into management, for some reason Irving's company were not acting, and I was able to give Jack Archer an engagement. He was really very old, though, so far as appearances went, I do not think he appeared to have changed since I was a schoolboy. With me he played a part in which I had to throw him down. He fell like a block of marble—I expected to see him break. I was very careful with him, but even then he asked me to be still more careful, and told me what he had never confided to anyone. 'You know,' he said, in a whisper, 'I'm really very old. I'm over eighty!'

"Jack Archer had one very peculiar foible—he imitated monkeys. It was his ruling passion. At any odd moment, when he was doing nothing in particular, he would, to the intense surprise of a new member, become a monkey. He had developed this absurd mimetic gift to a fine art—every expression, line of his face and movement of the muscles, eyes and mouth, became horribly like a monkey's. He swarmed up imaginary ropes; looked down from an imaginary height, and made the peculiar hissing noise of monkeys; cracked imaginary nuts, and threw them down, contemptuously, if he found nothing in the shell. We actors would be very quiet, waiting about at rehearsals, when suddenly Archer would become the grinning monkey swarming up a rope—a most grotesque effect.

"Imagine Archer's complete bliss when he was cast as an ape in *Faust*, and how wonderfully well he played the part. He had acquired the monkey's extraordinary habit of carrying the tongue slightly visible between the inflated lips. Though we knew he could do all the monkey actions well enough, every night, when he was making up as an ape, he could not resist doing this very characteristic imitation of the monkey for our special benefit.

"Joseph Pennell came round to make sketches behind the Lyceum Theatre one night, during the run of *Faust*. He posed several people in the green-room, and made drawings from them. Poor old Jack was very anxious to be drawn, and posed himself in a very characteristic position, difficult to maintain. He thought Pennell was sketching him, and kept the pose for a solid half-hour. Not until the end of that period did we find that Pennell was not drawing him at all.

"Another of Archer's peculiarities on tour was to speak the brogue, or the dialect, of the locality upon which we happened to quarter ourselves. In Ireland, he was Irish; in Scotland, Scotch; in Wales, Welsh, and so on. He rolled out the Lancashire and Yorkshire dialects with equal facility, and he had the dialect of the lower classes of Edinburgh people on the tip of his tongue. When in America, he spoke the usual drawl of the Yankee, and as he travelled towards the country of the black man, he became the Southern negro to the life—so far as speech was concerned."

V

One other of Martin Harvey's pictures of the personalities behind the stage of the Lyceum may be given—a glimpse of the venerable Mrs Stirling.

"She was a delightful lady," Martin Harvey told me, "and very old. Indeed, she was well over eighty at the time I recall her. She was married to a famous civil engineer, and at the end of her life had no need to continue her work on the stage. But the dear old lady loved the theatre. She played the nurse in *Romeo and Juliet* to the last. When playing, she would sit in the greenroom until it was her time to go on—apparently almost comatose. Looking at her, you would hardly have thought it possible for the very aged lady to take the stage, and hold or entertain an audience. When the call boy warned her, she would awaken as if from a deep sleep, and, leaning on his arm, go to the wings. When her cue came, she was a different woman—transformed entirely. Twenty years seemed to slip from her shoulders like a mantle, and no one would have dreamed she was the same frail, old lady who seemed to be almost unconscious of her surroundings in the greenroom."

VI

These glimpses of the Lyceum from behind the stage, might be prolonged indefinitely. For instance, Martin Harvey will talk delightfully of the well-known players who from time to time served under Irving's leadership. A chapter could easily be filled by his eulogy of Ellen Terry as an actress, and his fine appreciation of her exquisite art. The better-known members of the company are, however, familiar to the public, and have been much written about. I have confined this part of Mr Harvey's recollections of the old Lyceum to the players who were notable members of the company, though their personal peculiarities were not so well known to theatre-goers as they were to the players associated with them.

In speaking of these early days at the Lyceum, Martin Harvey recalls that the new-comer had to feel his way towards intimacy with his surroundings. Old Mead was always friendly; Sam Johnson was tolerantly disposed, but generally speaking the old stagers were high and mighty personages, and took but little notice of new-comers.

"I felt a bit out in the cold during the early years," Martin Harvey said, speaking of this attitude. "We youngsters kept to ourselves to a great extent. But as time passed the atmosphere thawed perceptibly. After the American tour, I knew most of the members better, and had passed through the stage of cold patronage to intimacy. The old greenroom became a familiar place to me, and my fellow-players were all pretty hail-fellow-well-met. The dignity of the greenroom in the palmy days of Covent Garden and Drury Lane, had given place to a much easier and friendlier intercourse at the Lyceum. Looking back, I miss those pleasant evenings in the Lyceum greenroom—the charming meetings, the pleasant gossip, the interchange of ideas, and the talks we had about hopes and plans for the future. It was a delightful gathering place, and distinguished people, unfamiliar with the theatre, liked to enter it, and valued the visit as a high privilege. All gone," Martin Harvey concluded; "the old atmosphere of the greenroom is vanishing from the theatres. One of my regrets is that the greenroom is going. It lent a charm to the theatre which one misses behind the scenes in these days, when actors are called from their dressing-rooms, and retire to them when their appearances have been made. The social side of the life at the Lyceum, the hours spent in the company of fellow-players in the greenroom, gave me memories of the theatre I would not like to have missed. There is scarcely the equivalent of the Lyceum greenroom behind the stage of to-day."

CHAPTER XIII

MR HARVEY'S ADVANCE WITH IRVING—A SLOW PROCESS—THE LYCEUM VACATION COMPANY ON TOUR—HOLIDAY EXPERIMENTS IN MANAGEMENT—PLAYING ON CLASSIC BOARDS—AN OTHELLO STORY—THE BEGINNING OF A PARTNERSHIP—MISS DE SILVA'S FAMILY CIRCLE—A CHILD ON THE STAGE—A TRAGEDY AND ITS CONSEQUENCES

I

In the Lyceum, from being a player of small parts, Martin Harvey slowly but steadily grew to be a trusted member of the company, capable of sustaining a round of important characters. Progress as an actor in the Lyceum was in no sense meteor-like, and ambitious young men were apt to chafe under the restraint. Martin Harvey tells how his career widened out slightly with the first American tour, and how, instead of being a silent member working in the ranks of the supers, he began to find favour with the chief of the Lyceum. During the American tour he was entrusted with such parts as the Dauphin in *Louis XI.*, Osric in *Hamlet*, Lorenzo in *The Merchant of Venice*, Alexander Oldworthy in *Nance Oldfield*, and the boy's part in *The Lyons Mail*. All those parts represented substantial progress, but the opportunities did not lead very far.

Directly the company came back to town, the situation changed. Irving was in the habit of engaging distinguished actors from the outside during his London season, and, as a consequence, the reshuffling of parts nearly always meant the junior members of the company, who had been given opportunities while on tour in Great Britain, or America, found the chances they valued somewhat restricted. The policy pursued at the Lyceum is, of course, a familiar managerial attitude. It is necessary to present a strong list of personalities to fill a London theatre, and Irving had to comply with the conditions, though by so doing he put into the background many capable actors who were permanently on his salary list. When the company went on its travels, the situation improved for the members of the Lyceum company. The actors added to make the London programme more attractive withdrew, and the opportunities existing in the Lyceum repertoire were once more given to the permanent members of the company. Satisfactory as Martin Harvey found it to be given important parts when the Lyceum company was travelling, his spirits were repeatedly dashed when Irving returned to the Lyceum, for he was always put back to the least important utility work.

Whetted by the progress made in the Lyceum company, little as it was, Martin Harvey's ambition grew. He formed one of a number of young men who had the same problem to face—the task of getting more and more experience. These junior members of the company were constantly thinking what a splendid experience it would be if they could get some familiarity with the problems of management, and at the same time create opportunities which would allow them to play the greater parts in dramatic literature—the parts which tax the capacities of the actor to the utmost.

Arising out of this desire, there came into being a very singular enterprise, which was for several seasons to be a familiar item in the round of provincial theatrical attractions. A little company was organised by William Haviland, Martin Harvey and Louis Calvert, for the vacation weeks when Sir Henry Irving was neither playing in London, nor on tour. William Haviland, it should be said, had already made his mark in the Lyceum company as an earnest and powerful actor, while Louis Calvert, known to-day to all playgoers, at the moment had perhaps more experience than the rest of the trio of ambitious young men from the Lyceum. By permission of Sir Henry Irving, this little enterprise was allowed to arrange its tour as the Lyceum Vacation Company, and one notes, in looking back over the programme, that the most was made of the fact. The words " Lyceum Vacation Company " by permission of " Mr Irving " bulked very largely in the announcements, while the fact that it was under the direction of Messrs Haviland and Martin Harvey, though plainly stated, was not insistently displayed in the largest type. The idea of the young actors was to run this company on a brief vacation tour, attempting ambitious plays and allotting themselves the more important parts. Sir Henry Irving looked very kindly on the proposal, lent the company his countenance in every way, and forwarded its objects by the loan of scenery, costumes and other theatrical effects. Backed by Sir Henry Irving's name, no difficulty was experienced in arranging a full list of dates for the few available weeks, and, to the astonishment of its organisers, the vacation tour, besides giving greater opportunities, proved a financial success.

Lovers of theatrical art would find it interesting to look over some of these early playbills, in which Martin Harvey took his first steps in theatrical management with Mr William Haviland. The Lyceum company in its first year was certainly ambitious. In one week it essayed to give *Othello*, *Ruy Blas*, *The Lady of Lyons* and *The Taming of the Shrew*. Mr Louis Calvert played Othello, Mr Haviland, Iago, and Mr Martin Harvey appeared as Cassio. For the first time we see our hero creating a great romantic part, for he sustained the title rôle in *Ruy Blas*, while Mr Haviland was his Don Cæsar de Bazan, and Mr Calvert played Don Salluste. In *The Lady of Lyons*, Mr Haviland was the Claude Melnotte, Mr Martin Harvey appeared as Beauseant, and Mr Calvert played Colonel Damas. In *The Taming of the Shrew*, Martin Harvey appeared as Petruchio, and it is more than interesting to note that Miss N. de Silva was the Katherine of the evening. These plays do not represent the complete repertoire as performed by the company, for other plays were produced, the programme being varied each season. The foregoing view of a typical week's "vacation" work will show that all concerned with the enterprise were not only ambitious to attempt the great rôles in the grand manner, but had the courage of their convictions. It is sufficient to say here that the tour, primarily undertaken as a means of enlarging the scope of the young players' experience, became a standing engagement, and proved profitable, while the press notices of the productions are uniformly appreciative and very often are full of enthusiastic praise.

II

Of the earlier tour, Martin Harvey says: "Everybody at the Lyceum was tickled and amused by our ambition, particularly dear, old Loveday. Irving was more than kind in the matter, while Loveday was most helpful with practical advice. Our joint capital, when we first went out, was represented by a total of sixty pounds. None of us knew anything about management, and when we started the tour at the old Theatre Royal, at Bristol, we had only one date arranged. Still, we were a very happy family party. Most of the men of the company were accompanied by their wives, and we allotted the parts as fairly as we could all round. It was a high-spirited adventure, with a distinct holiday flavour about it, but in later seasons, when we knew more, our management was more business-like. In time, older members of the Lyceum company, instead of looking on the enterprise with amused, but not ill-natured, contempt, became quite glad to be included in the tour, taking engagements in the ordinary way.

"Ah! those were delightful days. I shall never forget the first night at the Theatre Royal, Bristol. How excited we were when we looked through the curtain and actually saw a few people—real people, who had paid to see us act. And how proud we were of essaying the classic rôles, on sacred boards trodden in their day by all the great actors of the past, including possibly Garrick and Edmund Kean. I know the night we produced *Ruy Blas*, we had worked ourselves up to such a pitch of excitement that when we were called before the curtain we were hysterical.

"Yes; we had great times on the tours—never-to-be-forgotten days and nights. It was a splendid tonic after being suppressed all the year at the Lyceum, and working in the theatre's arid atmosphere, to be out on these tours playing the parts about which we had been dreaming for months in each year. The prospect kept us alive during the disappointing months with Irving. We were always thinking of the plays, studying the parts, getting the costumes ready and then beginning to rehearse. We really began to live when the rehearsals came round, and we got on the road as soon as we could, and stopped out as long as our autumn engagements at the Lyceum permitted.

"In those tours, I may say I took my first serious steps as a manager. The principles, observed closely when watching the work at the Lyceum, I was able to put into practice, on a modest scale, each year. Early in the history of this little venture, I began to learn the first steps of management. It fell to my lot to book the dates and plan out other details, while each man had to rehearse our company of seventeen or eighteen members, in those plays in which he sustained the conspicuous parts. With this company, Haviland and myself were out five or six years, but Calvert, I think, only went out with us for one or two seasons. We were successful each year but the last. On that tour we decided to go in for a lighter form of entertainment, and presented a triple bill, which included *Robert Macaire*, a charming little play called, *An Old Song*, and *Iolanthe*. Partly because we changed our printing; again because our entertainment had been altered in character, and last, through the objection of the public to the triple bill, our last tour was not a success. The season was so bad that we touched our lowest point in receipts. We played to twenty-five shillings, one night, at the Corn Exchange, Coventry, where the people had to tread over huge bags of corn and grain to get to their seats. Literally we were sent to Coventry!

"These tours, by the way, had a curious origination," Martin Harvey told me, as we concluded our joint examination of this pleasant period in the actor's history. "They arose virtually out of a practical joke by William Terriss. When the Lyceum company was playing at Liverpool, a visit we paid on the eve of our first American tour, there was much curiosity about the plays Irving would select for presentation on the other side, and the usual heart-burning as to the allotment of parts. With us was a rather pompous member of our company, whom we will call Mr A. His great ambition was to play Othello, though I am afraid few of his fellow-members had ever detected signs of the kind of genius which would allow him to play the part with success.

"Well Terriss knew this, and, when the period of unrest about Irving's choice of plays and players was at its highest, he arranged for a prompter to come into the greenroom and whisper to A., portentously handing him a slip of paper at the same time. This whisper indicated, in confidence, that *Othello* was one of the plays Irving had selected, and the paper was supposed to give the cast, communicated to A. secretly. When Mr A. looked down the list, he found Sir Henry had chosen him to play Othello, to his own masterly Iago. Any ordinary man would have suspected the obvious joke, but A. was not that kind of man. He believed the message, and forthwith bought a copy of *Othello*. He used to go daily to New Brighton to study the part, and became a common feature on the sands, declaiming Othello's noble lines to the incoming waves. How we all enjoyed the joke of it, and the solemn manner assumed by A. when he took one or the other of us aside. 'I have just been over to New Brighton, studying my part,' he would say. We used to plead ignorance, and he would add, with increasing solemnity: 'Why, have you not heard? Irving is going to do Iago, and I am cast for Othello!'

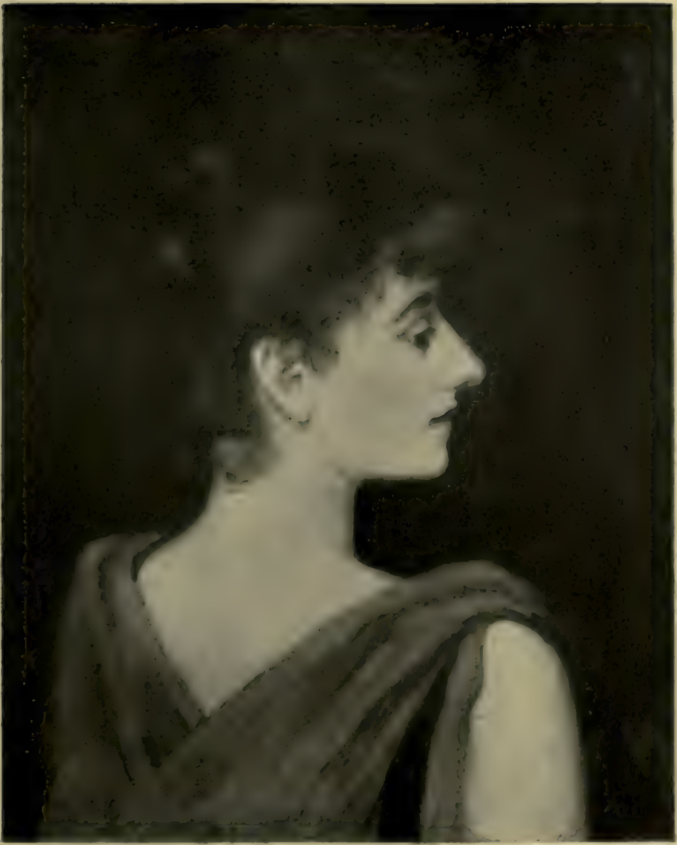
"Well the upshot was, the real arrangements made by Irving came out, and Othello was not referred to in the notices. Even then Mr A. did not believe the matter was a joke, and when the Lyceum season closed he organised a company and went into the country, playing the part. He did sufficiently well to justify him in continuing the tour. That set us thinking, and the Lyceum Theatre Company and our vacation flights were the result."

III

The story of Martin Harvey's life, from the present moment, cannot go any further without bringing into the narrative a lady, who began, about this period, to exercise the beginning of an influence which has played a great part in Mr Harvey's career. I refer to the delightful actress whose name is always associated with the actor manager's in all his later enterprises—the creator of the long line of delightful heroines who have lent vitality to the great plays associated with Mr Harvey's development as a manager.

To thousands the name will occur at once—Miss N. de Silva. Martin Harvey, in referring to the beginning of what has proved a lifelong association, has already told of the impression made upon him by a certain little page, who followed the fortunes of Benedick, when he first joined the Lyceum company. He describes her as " a brilliant figure swaggering amongst the motley crowd of Lyceum players, in a little suit of red, wearing a feather in her cap, and a fascinating pair of top boots." That was Martin Harvey's first glimpse of Angelita Helena Margarita de Silva Ferro, better known to a wide public as Miss N. de Silva, the heroine of most of Mr Harvey's productions. In this chapter, I purpose to do no more than briefly introduce the charming actress to her good friends—the audience.

Miss N. de Silva was the daughter of a family not only distinguished through its lineage, but also through the exceptional versatility of its members. Miss de Silva was the daughter of Don Ramon de Silva Ferro, described by his intimates as a charming man of extraordinary versatility. He had a distinguished career, and in the later years of his life was an attaché to the Spanish Legation in London. He wrote a life of Las Cases, after going over the ground he travelled, for which he was decorated. He also went through the Carlist war, in which, amongst other adventures, he was sentenced to death and received the order of " Isabella la Catolica." In later life, and while resident in London serving the Spanish Legation, he had an



Miss N. de Silva (Mrs. Harvey)

From a Pastel by Rose Le Quesne

important concession of fisheries from the Spanish government, near the Canary Islands. This valuable concession was worked by him, and it was his habit to visit the fishery each year, in his yacht. These visits ended in a tragedy, which altered the fortunes of the pleasant home into which Miss de Silva was born. The yacht used by her father, on the last of his visits of inspection, came into collision with another vessel, on a perfectly clear, calm day, and after the excitement following the disaster, although no one was in immediate danger, Don Ramon was reported missing. It would seem the shock of the collision must have cast him overboard, unnoticed; the tragic fact remains, he was never seen again.

On the maternal side, Miss de Silva was descended from another family remarkable in many ways. Her mother was the daughter of Lady Juliet Drummond, who was a daughter of Lady Caroline Drummond de Melford, who in her turn was a daughter of the last Earl of Seaforth, Sir Walter Scott's "Chief of Kintail" —the founder of the Seaforth Highlanders—a family rich in story and legend. Miss de Silva's mother, a delightful personality, lived to an advanced age, and maintained her charm and youthful spirit to the end. She learnt Italian very late in life, spoke Spanish and French, was a conversationalist of distinction in an age when conversation had not lost its charm, and attracted to her residence many distinguished people, whose presence gave the home circle in Regent's Park considerable vogue as a literary coterie. In such an atmosphere Miss de Silva was reared.

Miss de Silva's first step to the stage was a curious one. She was taken, at the age of eight or nine years, to see Sir Henry Irving as Hamlet, and the performance made a great impression on the young girl. She went home and announced her intention of going on the stage. Her father promised he would allow the girl to join the Lyceum company if she would pass a certain examination. He never dreamt she would secure the pass, as the task was of the character set for girls of nineteen to twenty years of age. However, much to his surprise, the pass in English and French literature was achieved, and the promise had to be ratified. Miss de Silva, at the age of ten, wrote to Sir Henry Irving in a manner so impressive that she received a reply, opening with a grave "Dear Sir." Partly because of her youth, and its almost childish charm—she carried a doll on her first visits to the theatre—Miss de Silva, when most children are still going to school, became a minor member of the Lyceum company of "young people," a pleasant, well-educated group of stage aspirants. Her association with the stage was in the beginning a girlish whim, permitted owing to the necessity of keeping to the terms of a rash promise, and a great source of pleasure to a singularly imaginative child. A few years later, when the tragic collision brought not only sorrow, but actual and acute poverty, to the pleasant home in which Miss de Silva had been tenderly raised, the stage became her career in grim earnest. The association with the Lyceum company ceased to be a light-hearted, girlish frolic. The child, now on the threshold of womanhood, had something more than a vague, artistic aspiration to spur her onward and upward. The stage became a profession exercised with purpose by a breadwinnner. At this period of her life was Miss de Silva when Martin Harvey joined the Lyceum company. From now onwards the story becomes, in a great measure, the record of a joint artistic achievement.

CHAPTER XIV

MARTIN HARVEY AND MISS DE SILVA JOIN FORCES—A MENAGE IN COCKSPUR STREET—A CALLING PLACE BETWEEN PICCADILLY AND THE STRAND—SOME EARLY FRIENDSHIPS—MARTIN HARVEY AS ARTIST AND COLLECTOR—" DIDDIE " TURNS OUT THE GUARD—FIRST THOUGHTS OF " THE ONLY WAY "—EARLY HISTORY OF THE PLAY—SIDNEY CARTON'S VOICE—A STORY IN THE ZOLA MANNER—MARTIN HARVEY AND THE FIRE BRIGADE—A CHRISTMAS TRAGEDY

I

THE figure of the interesting page Martin Harvey noted, during his first days in the Lyceum company, begins to play a leading part in the story of his life. As Martin Harvey was slowly realising himself as an actor, in Sir Henry Irving's company, he was thrown into contact with the many other players who worked at the Lyceum. The player of swaggering pages came out of the picture which formed his first impressions and became a real personality to him—a very charming, high-spirited girl, treading much the same path as himself, animated by the same ambitions.

There were constant meetings at the theatre, and naturally many talks. They unfolded interesting views on literature and exchanged ideas over the same books. Between rehearsals and matinees, Miss de Silva would leave the theatre for a brief lunch. Martin Harvey remembers a certain café in Oxford Street to which, on one wonderful day, they went together, and discovered a community of interest in coffee and rolls. " It exists to-day," he will say, naming it ; " and it still makes the finest coffee in London." This was the first of many visits to the same café. On a certain occasion he was permitted to see the little girl page, now a very self-possessed young lady with marked independence of character, to her home at Regent's Park. It was quite a red-letter day, and so delightful that it happened again and again. He made the acquaintance of the circle of friends who were constantly dropping into that home and, as a matter of fact, became one of them. And then came the American tour. " Would he be one of the company ? " was an important question for Martin Harvey. " Would Miss de Silva be selected ? " was another. Awful thought—she might go and he might be left behind. The very idea became a waking nightmare, until the announcements were put up, which set his mind at rest. They were both going.

Those were wonderful days, and the intimacy which started with a silent admiration for a little page who mingled with the crowd, had sensibly deepened before the end of the tour. Such a story can only develop in one way where high-spirited young people are concerned, and in the natural order of things there came a day when the association was set to the music of wedding bells, and members of the Lyceum company, now playing in its home in London, became aware that Benedick's page had discovered a Benedick for herself, and with him had set upon the always charming task of moulding the earth to her heart's desire. In books, love stories nearly always end with the ringing of wedding bells. In real life, they usually begin where the books break off. A great deal remained to be done by this community of two. There was the wonderful business of establishing a home. In Cockspur Street, there were four or five little Queen Anne houses, always kept in the pink of order—now no longer there. These were let out as bachelor apartments, and here Mr and Mrs Harvey began their housekeeping on the top floor.

There is a rule about taking apartments in London. People not overburdened with money, who have their way to make, begin housekeeping on the top floor. As things improve, and they prosper, they come down to the lower floors. When matters go well they arrive somewhere near the ground floor. The home of the Harveys was built on this progressive plan. Martin Harvey and his wife started their *ménage* on the top floor, and came down in three removals to the bottom floor. This peripatetic tendency in the home would synchronise with their joint advancement in professional esteem. But in the world, Martin Harvey was going up the ladder, and his progress was illustrated by his home moving through the different social phases of the apartment house, downwards.

"It was a charming time," Martin Harvey tells his friends. "We were near to the theatre, and a sort of half-way house to the Strand and the West End. Our friends, passing either way, used to come in and out. Our most regular visitor was L. F. Austin, whom many remember as a writer with a most delicate touch and perhaps the greatest exponent of the weekly *causerie* of his time. In those days, besides contributing an amazing amount of ephemeral matter to the press, he was Sir Henry Irving's private secretary. For years he wrote the Handbook pages for *The Illustrated London News*, after G. A. Sala and James Payn, and before G. K. Chesterton. Scarcely a day passed without Austin dropping in, usually with a poem or some quaint conceit addressed to my wife. He was a tall, elegant fellow; and was then at his high-water mark as a journalist and known everywhere. We were very much flattered by his friendship, and my wife christened him 'The Dodo!' He was delightfully witty, and loved to tell us what he was going to do. A few days later we often read the same thoughts expressed in various papers, in the very phrases the Dodo had used, as he rolled in his easy-chair by our fireside.

"Of other friends we had many in those days. A constant visitor was George Frampton, now Sir George Frampton. He was not then the prosperous art worker he is to-day. Sir George Frampton, at that time, had a studio which was an outhouse down an alley in Camberwell. There he completed two of the finest things he has ever done—"The Children of the Wolf," and "The Dancing Girl." He used to come very regularly to our home, perched at the top of the old house in Cockspur Street, as did another distinguished artist of to-day, who had not then arrived. That was his studio companion, Mr R. A. Bell. Members of the Lyceum company found us conveniently situated. We were on the beaten track, and it was easier to call on us than to pass our door. We used to have little evenings when we were not playing, and to them came many young people, following one or other of the arts, eager, hopeful and ambitious. Some of them have gone on and upwards, while others have passed out of recollection altogether.

"Our simple home at Cockspur Street, with its old friends, reminds me of a dear story of Henry Irving. Loveday, who relinquished a musical career to join Irving, told me that, when Irving was getting towards the end, and there were signs he would not be able to go on much longer, he saw there might be poverty before him, or at least life on a meagre income. 'He did not care,' Loveday used to say. 'Why!' Irving would explain, 'I have lived on fifty shillings a week, and can do it again. We'll have a little cottage in the country, old friend, and you shall take the old violin from its case and come over each evening and play to me.'"

II

To the little home in Cockspur Street, friends came and went, but the circle was increased in numbers from within. Both Mr Harvey's children were born in Cockspur Street, and very soon, to the cares of professional duties and the entertaining of friends, Miss de Silva had to add the responsibilities of maternity. Things went very happily at the chambers in Cockspur Street. The salaries of actors permanently engaged at the Lyceum were never great, but they were substantial, and progressive, and at the time of his marriage Martin Harvey's income more than met his expenses. "I could always find my share of the capital necessary to take us out on the vacation tour," is the way he puts it. Apart from the extent of the salary, a Lyceum engagement had the one great advantage of continuity. Actors engaged there had none of those dreary spells of "resting" which players know so well. There was no particular reason why the members of the household at Cockspur Street should worry about the future, and they lived happily in the present. There was the work of the theatre constantly going on, in town and on tour, with occasional journeys to America. These duties left a certain amount of leisure, and in it Martin Harvey began to apply his tastes as a collector to the decoration of his home. The small rooms at Cockspur Street began to grow crowded with carefully considered additions. Both Mr Harvey and Miss de Silva still like to talk of their wonderful purchase of a fine Court cupboard at Manchester, and their dismay on finding it would not go into their rooms on the top floor. As a matter of fact, the piece stopped at the second floor, and never got past it.

In those days, too, Mr Harvey resumed a disturbed allegiance to an old love—painting. Most of his leisure was spent in sketching out of doors. The frequent tours facilitated this, and at home the parks near by gave restricted opportunities. About this time, Mr Harvey was always painting and sketching, and had a fixed idea that he could pursue a career at the theatre and in the studio at the same time. His present home is hung with several examples of his work, which include many delightful landscapes, and there is no doubt, if Martin Harvey had remained an actor untrammelled by managerial cares, we should have heard more of him in the art world. Still, in the Cockspur Street days, his career had not shaped itself. He had the cares of his new home sitting lightly upon him, the delight of watching his children grow up, a busy life in the theatre, and his two permanent interests—sketching out of doors, and ransacking London as a small collector. At this period, too, he was much engrossed in the dawning intelligence of his daughter Muriel, who in her own way was a great frequenter of the park—in a perambulator. Apart from the hygienic value of the morning progress, "Diddie," aged four, was a connoisseur of soldiers. At the age of five, on one of these pilgrimages near St James's Palace, she was discovered interviewing the guard in his box. She was armed with a tiny toy musket, and no doubt felt very martial. " Diddie " was advising the guardsman to run away; she wanted to take up his duty, and with her toy musket shouldered took possession of his box.

III

But time was passing, and behind the pleasant routine of life on a moderate, though assured, income the young actor had ambitions which the opportunities at the Lyceum could not satisfy. On the one hand was the routine of work, at a fair salary, with a reasonable degree of permanency about it. On that side must be counted limited opportunity. On the other side was a vague dream based on the belief that he could do better work as an actor—and a wild sea of risk.

Already the matter had been discussed between the young husband and his wife. As the years progressed, Martin Harvey's resentment that each time the Lyceum company came back to town, he was pegged back to minor parts, grew until it became a constant source of exasperation. He had visions of a greater career, and was encouraged by his wife to cherish them. During a certain memorable tour in America the problem grew in importance. Martin Harvey was talking vaguely of the days when he would leave the Lyceum and stand alone in the theatrical world. Even in those days, the bent of his ambition was not to be a leading actor, but to widen the scope of his operations so that he might manage his own productions and determine the choice of characters he should assume. With Mrs Harvey, the question—how this ambition should be achieved—was often discussed.

Between themselves they decided the part inaugurating the great enterprise should not be Shakespearean. Mrs Harvey tells me she had decided that, if the opportunity came, Martin Harvey should essay a romantic part, with a strong leaven of character behind it—a lovable, sympathetic creation away from the beaten track of heroes of picturesque drama. One day her vague ideas about this nebulous character took definite shape. She joined her husband at their midday meal, in an American hotel, and announced her intention that he should play Sidney Carton. Curiously enough, " A Tale of Two Cities " was one of the stories written by Charles Dickens that Martin Harvey had not read. He went out immediately and bought a copy of the book, and read the story through from end to end. From the moment of completing the story, it became a fixed idea, existing between the ambitious young husband and his sympathetic, but still more ambitious, wife, that, when the vaguely imagined great day did arrive, the great part to suit the opportunity should be the character of Sidney Carton.

So was born the idea of *The Only Way.* Years were to elapse before it fructified, but the idea steadily germinated, and was rarely absent from their minds. The play became an aspiration, then an acute desire. It passed to the point where scenarios began to be planned. From this stage it went into the hands of a dramatist. In time there was a complete play. And that was as far as the idea could be carried: an earnest young player, an enthusiastic and highly imaginative wife, sitting together and poring over the first draft of a play. Not a chance of production; not the glimmering of a possibility. Only the framework of a play, and two people who believed in it, thought about it daily, talked about it hourly, and in their leisure went over every line, cutting here, adding there, debating, testing, actually trying the effect of every single line and situation. Surely never was a play so earnestly debated or so patiently planned with loving, artistic care. Sidney Carton represented the big idea, and two people believed in him.

An obsession, if you like. In those Cockspur Street days, when the big idea had been born, and was being carefully nursed in its swaddling-clothes by two fond parents, a man came to the basement, as they sat at the window, delivering one of Martin Harvey's latest finds as a collector. He was in charge of a van belonging to one of the big carrier firms, and shouted out his instructions to his subordinates. He was a big man with a deep, round and melancholy voice, pervaded by a gusty note of alcoholism which marred the beauty of the natural sound itself. The man filled the street with his exceptional and arresting voice, and his copious flow of not very choice language. "Listen, Nell," Martin Harvey said. "If I ever play Sidney Carton, that is the voice I shall imitate. There speaks such a voice as I have imagined Sidney Carton using."

The voice Martin Harvey and his wife heard, as they listened at the open window in Cockspur Street, was the inspiration on which Martin Harvey founded Sidney Carton's very manner and method of address.

IV

Just two or three stories of the Cockspur Street days before we pass on.

One has the atmosphere Zola loved. "The race of caretakers is a peculiar breed," Martin Harvey admitted one day. "At Cockspur Street, in charge of the place, we had many varieties. Various housekeepers came, one by one, and with their husbands; and various housekeepers went, one by one, with their husbands. They are like gipsies—a race apart.

"I remember one pair very clearly. They were both addicted to drink. The husband, when in drink, used to stump about on the ground floor, reciting passages either from the Bible or the Book of Common Prayer. He prided himself on the

A Shady Corner of the Garden

Two Household Favourites

MARTIN HARVEY'S HOME

range and extent of his scriptural knowledge, and a symptom of intoxication was his desire to mouth his knowledge aloud.

"To the house at this time came a young couple, newly married. They were a pair of almost helpless babies. The woman was a radiant young creature, who had played at several theatres. The man was of the type one associates with wealthy connections and lack of thought. There came a day when the woman gave birth to a child. Everything was progressing favourably, but owing perhaps to their joint ineptitude, some foolish error in the matter of diet set up peritonitis. In a few hours this beautiful young creature was dead; her husband left the scene of the tragedy, and outside their rooms the caretaker, drunk, walked for hours, reciting the burial service."

Another story Martin Harvey tells. Cockspur Street was an excellent site from which to view the progress of people passing towards the west. "My wife and I, one day, were sitting at the open window looking down on the hundreds of people passing to and fro. A man stopped and began to look earnestly at our floor. I laughed. 'Watch,' I said, 'the force of suggestion. If that man stands looking up as he is doing, he will have a hundred people stopping to gaze in the same direction. If he stops four minutes, there will be a thousand. The longer he stops, the more people will join him, and look up at our roof! It was even as I said. The crowd grew at an appalling rate. The open space was thick with people—looking upwards. We enjoyed the sight immensely. Then the fire engine clattered up, and four or five burly members of the brigade stormed the room in which we were sitting. The thousands of people below, who had entertained us so much, were watching one of our chimneys blazing. The firemen were most polite about it—and jolly comfortable men they proved to be, as well. They filed into my room and took off their helmets, after the outbreak had been damped down. I asked them to have a glass of beer, which they did. Indeed they finished the cask! 'That's all right,' said the stoutest and most cheerful of the brigade, as they departed, 'you'll hear no more about it.' The next morning, I was summoned for that being the occupier of certain properties, I had permitted my chimney to be on fire."

Here is a story of Christmas night which both Mr and Mrs Harvey are fond of telling, when they speak of the Cockspur Street days.

"We were coming home, after spending the evening with some friends, and as we neared our door found an old chap leaning against it, pale, insensible, and apparently dying. I at once took him into the house, and carried him up to our room on the first floor. Then I went out in search of a doctor. The first doctor I found refused to come. Then a policeman directed me to Dr Mills, of Suffolk Place. He promised to come over at once, but by the time I reached home, and long before the doctor arrived, the man was dead.

" He was a delicate-looking man, with a face full of fine lines—fairly well dressed, but in a way that suggested he had come down in the world. Happening on a Christmas night, we naturally felt very distressed that such a fine-looking man should have dropped exhausted at our very doors, and wove many stories about him and the causes leading to his starvation, in the streets and in the midst of plenty. The body was removed by the police, and of course the usual inquiries were set afoot. At the inquest he was identified, and the doctor gave the result of his post-mortem examination. This proved, beyond a doubt, that the shabby-genteel, starving man whom we had succoured in the streets on Christmas night had in reality been dining out, and had over-eaten himself to such an extent that the after-effects had stopped the action of his heart. The doctor explained that, judging from the condition of the starving stranger, he had never seen such a gross case of death through over-indulgence in his life."

CHAPTER XV

LEAVING THE LYCEUM—A MISTAKE AND ITS CONSEQUENCES — INCREASING OPPORTUNITIES — THE CRITICS AND THE IRVING MANNER—“THE CHILDREN OF THE KING”—MRS PATRICK CAMPBELL LOOKS FOR A PELLEAS—MR SUTRO’S DISCOVERY—MR HARVEY PROVES THE IDEAL PELLEAS—MAETERLINCK AND THE COSTUME—A DRESS REHEARSAL—MAETERLINCK’S GREAT COMPLIMENT—“PELLEAS AND MELISANDE”—THEN AND NOW—TAKING “PELLEAS” TO THE PROVINCES

I

YEARS were slipping away, and life was running pleasantly for Martin Harvey. But he had not served under the Lyceum chief without absorbing something of Irving’s great ambition and ability to concentrate on his art, while the summer tours had at least served to reveal the joys of management without accentuating the sorrows. Martin Harvey began to think of the day when he would leave the Lyceum. The parts allotted to him were now much more important, but they did not give the scope desired, and the restraint of going on in the same way, year after year, was beginning to tell on a sensitive temperament, and make the young actor restless.

From time to time, something of this desire was hinted at by Martin Harvey, but the one or two tentative attempts made to gain his freedom were not pushed forward with determination. Irving was very sensitive in such matters, and suggestions that Mr Harvey should leave the company were ill received. Irving did not like people to leave him.

Freedom came through an oversight in the Lyceum office. At the end of each season, members of the Lyceum company saw the notice put up, and if they desired re-engagement they wrote in to the management. In this particular year, Mr Harvey wrote in the ordinary way, and received no reply. Taking it for granted that he was no longer wanted, the young actor cast about for other employment. At that time Mr Forbes Robertson was preparing his *Hamlet*. The Lyceum player approached the new management, and was offered the part of Osric. When the engagement had been made, it transpired that the failure to re-engage Mr Harvey for the Lyceum was a mistake, and his agreement came along almost as soon as the new undertaking with Forbes Robertson had been ratified. Martin Harvey decided events had turned out happily so far as he was concerned. He wanted to leave the Lyceum company, and here was the chance of breaking away and laying the blame on the mistake about the re-engagement—thus avoiding all manner of personal explanations. He advanced the claims of the prior engagement as a reason for not returning to the Lyceum, and in the end his wishes prevailed.

The long engagement at the Lyceum ended, and though he returned several times to the old theatre, to play special engagements under Irving, Martin Harvey was never again a permanent member of the Lyceum company.

Now it is no part of my purpose in this highly personal book on Martin Harvey, which aims at presenting the popular actor as he really lives and works, to give a complete review of the parts he has played on the stage, or finally to appraise the value of his artistic work. The most important part of Mr Harvey's career lies before him, and it is early in the day to begin appraising his achievements. While I do not propose to give a record of all the parts he has played, something should be said of the opportunities which began to crowd on the young actor directly he regained his freedom. After leaving the Lyceum, time had to elapse before Mr Harvey could take up the engagement with Mr Forbes Robertson, and at once it became apparent to him and his friends that the severance from the Lyceum company had been a well timed and chosen step in his career.

Already, before leaving the Lyceum, he was beginning to be recognised as an actor of more than average distinction, and admirers were commencing to say exactly the thoughts which dominated Martin Harvey's mind and impelled him to seek freedom and a wider opportunity. Criticising a performance of his, one of the last at the Lyceum, I find *The Daily Mail* tersely summing up the situation. The play was *Olivia*, and in a notice of the revival, which occupied the best part of a column, *The Daily Mail* critic states Martin Harvey's problem in two lines—the only reference made to him, by the way. "Mr Sam Johnson and Mr Martin Harvey lavish care and skill upon mere husks of parts."

Again, speaking of one of the first parts played by the now popular actor away from the Lyceum, another discerning critic takes a similar view of the same situation. "Mr Martin Harvey's performance of Algy Gray is alone worth a visit; the very admirable young actor, previously only known to the Lyceum, will now, let us hope, have other and better chances of distinction than the Lyceum can afford, where necessarily the public interest is most fixed on the great central figure. Mr Harvey has received his training in a fine school; I feel confident we shall soon have the results of it in parts worthy of his undoubted gifts." The situation, as the actor read it for himself, was obvious to all who followed the work of the theatre closely—so obvious indeed that writers were openly referring to the matter in the ordinary routine of dramatic criticism. Certainly, the time had come for Martin Harvey to leave the Lyceum.

Nor was proof wanted of the wisdom of the step. The actor's opportunities increased at once. In the interval between the last Lyceum days and the production of *Hamlet* by Mr Forbes Robertson, Martin Harvey was at the Criterion playing one of the brothers in *Sweet Nancy*, and a still greater opportunity came his way in the same theatre. The management preceded *Sweet Nancy* with *An Old Song*, a play in one act by the Rev. Freeman Wills and A. Fitzmaurice King. The hero of the play is the composer of the "The Marseillaise," and admirers of the actor will recognise the impersonation at once. Under the title *Rouget de L'Isle*, the one-act play has passed permanently into the actor's repertoire, and is familiar to all who know Martin Harvey's work.

The production of *Sweet Nancy* brought Martin Harvey much favourable recognition, but the one-act play was a greater opportunity—it scored a little triumph so far as appreciation was concerned, and Miss N. de Silva shared the honours. Indeed, it is interesting to note that at once after leaving the Lyceum, Martin Harvey began to attempt escape from a niche he had begun to fill as a player of boys' parts, or boys on the verge of manhood, and was given an opportunity of showing what he could do with the first of a long range of romantic characters, since presented by him for the approbation of his great following. Interesting, too, is this brief production at the Criterion, as it shows the first association of Miss N. de Silva with Martin Harvey in the lengthening list of personal triumphs they have scored together. In *An Old Song*, Miss de Silva sustained the part of the ruffianly landlord's daughter which has become one of the most touching characters in her repertoire.

Another interesting matter stands out of this period in Martin Harvey's development. The influence of Irving on his young men was very marked, and the obvious thing to say about all the actors who developed in the Lyceum School was to level at them the charge of imitating their great master. Almost every actor who graduated under Irving's influence at the Lyceum, had had to live down this prejudice. No sooner did Martin Harvey get his freedom, than delightful press appreciation was showered upon the work of himself and his charming wife. But lest the young actor should be carried away by his early successes, the cold douche was gently applied by one of his critics. Within a month of his departure from the Lyceum came the usual charge—the easiest reproach to level, but not now so often cast. " Also," says the discerning critic, " he imported methods from the Lyceum only effective in a master's hands. None but JOVE can wield JOVE's thunderbolts. Macready pauses and the rest are for Macreadys and their peers." Cleverly obvious and obviously clever; perhaps even unconsciously prophetic. These young and ambitious men must be reminded of their master, and, so far as Martin Harvey is concerned, he was. Time, however, has been the best answer to the charge, not too kindly levelled. No one to-day would question the individual quality of Martin Harvey's personality, or the originality with which he invests all his conceptions.

II

After leaving the Lyceum, Martin Harvey was in constant request, and within a very short time we find him playing a succession of important parts. The line of characters with which he had been associated had rather tended to set their imprint on him, as an actor. Always at the Lyceum he had appeared in plays which demanded the gay, irresponsible spirit of youth, which Martin Harvey was so well able to convey, and when he left the Lyceum, the theatrical world seemed bent on fixing him in the ranks of players of one class of parts—a habit very pronounced in the theatres, and dangerous to the future of the ambitious actor.

After *Sweet Nancy*, we find Martin Harvey still associated with the youthful characters which had given him his only acting opportunities at the Lyceum. With the New Century Theatre Society, he played Erhart in *John Gabriel Borkman*, during the Ibsen boom. A short time after this engagement, he was at the Avenue Theatre playing Francis Strange in *Belle Bellair*, a play produced to reveal the art of Mrs John Wood, who sustained the title-rôle. To this enterprise came Miss Irene Vanbrugh to play Vivian, and out of the press criticism of that day it is interesting to quote a prophecy by Clement Scott, then in the full tide of his sway as dramatic critic of *The Daily Telegraph*. Those who have taste for such things will note with interest that the morning after the production of *Belle Bellair*, Clement Scott was saying in *The Daily Telegraph*: "We have two young people, the seeming orphans, the victims of fate, who again give us acting as good as it can be from Mr Martin Harvey and Miss Irene Vanbrugh, who are rapidly, not coming, but leaping to the front." This was high praise indeed, coming from the Clement Scott of that day, and in the light of after events, the opinion so casually expressed appears to have in it the quality of inspiration. Certainly both players have done not a little by their subsequent careers to justify the prediction.

The Forbes Robertson *Hamlet* did not present a great acting opportunity for Martin Harvey, but his next appearance, in *The Children of the King*, done at the Court Theatre, proved a great advance. A delightful fairy play, it was revised for the English stage by John Davidson, and with Humperdinck's music proved a great delight. In this play, Martin Harvey was the Prince, one of those graceful boyish parts, full of the spirit of romance and chivalry, and the forerunner of much we admire in our day in his wonderful Pelleas. From the Court Theatre, Martin Harvey went to the Garrick, taking part in 22A *Curzon Street*, a play by Brandon Thomas and John Edwards. It will thus be seen that in the short time he was at liberty as an actor, as distinct from an actor manager, Martin Harvey was much in demand, and had almost gone as far as he could alone. He appeared to be settling down as the leading player of a particular type of character—as a player with the art to reveal the charm and glamour of romantic youth.

But a great landmark in his career began to shape itself immediately after the production of 22A *Curzon Street.* Forbes Robertson's season with Mrs Patrick Campbell was still going on, and, a revision of their programme becoming necessary, it was decided to produce *Pelleas and Melisande* for a series of matinees. In those days, Maeterlinck and his work were but little known in this country, except to a small and somewhat exclusive circle of admirers. The decision to test the charm of Maeterlinck on English audiences was destined to offer a wonderful opportunity for Martin Harvey. Indeed, when Forbes Robertson and Mrs Patrick Campbell came to look round for the ideal Pelleas, there was only one possible actor for the part. The whole of Martin Harvey's work at the Lyceum and after; his long association with different rôles demanding youth and sensitive intelligence; his capacity to send across the footlights the joy, romance and chivalry of an age difficult to render with artistic truth—all combined to mark him out as the artist to be chosen in any attempt to visualise Maeterlinck's wonderful dream.

Who should play Pelleas was an earnestly debated question, and a grave preoccupation for Mr Forbes Robertson and the lady who was to be Melisande. In the end Alfred Sutro was the man who advised the selection of Martin Harvey. The successful dramatist of to-day had just begun an association with an art which has since given us all such de-

Martin Harvey as "Pelléas"

From a Photograph by Miss Padgett

lightful results. He was then chiefly known as a translator, admirer and interpreter of the work of Maeterlinck. Mr Sutro saw Martin Harvey in *The Children of the King*, and wrote of him immediately after the performance, "You are Pelleas." Mr Sutro advised the engagement of the actor who played the Prince so charmingly at the Court. The advice was accepted, rehearsals were begun, and the young actor was engaged, almost without knowing it, on the first of what has since proved a long list of artistic triumphs.

III

The production of Pelleas meant much to Martin Harvey—perhaps more than he knew at the time. His success in the series of matinees was no mere accident. Physically, Martin Harvey was marked out for Pelleas. In personal appearance, even now, he has the exact physique. His gloriously youthful face, the eloquent eyes which lend such spirituelle grace to the expression, the proud, sensitive mouth, and the note of wistful melancholy which Martin Harvey can sound at will, with his wonderful voice, were then as now definite personal assets guaranteeing the actor would fill the eye, and satisfy the ear, in presenting the hero of Maeterlinck's beautiful dream.

Something much more elusive was necessary to make the difficult part live—a delicacy of sympathy animating the mind from within. Martin Harvey not only happened to be the ideal Pelleas physically, but temperamentally. He has told me how, long before Mr Forbes Robertson's production, he had gone to Maeterlinck as a devoted student. When *Pelleas* was mooted at the Prince of Wales' Theatre, Martin Harvey was more than ready to essay it. He was steeped in the thought and atmosphere of the play ; knew and revelled in its beauty, had dreamed of playing Pelleas without ever expecting the artistic opportunity would be given to him. A sensitive artist, a student and devoted admirer of Maeterlinck's play, peculiarly susceptible to the beauty of thought, the tender mysticism and the wonderful subtlety of phrasing in *Pelleas and Melisande*, his whole being responded to the prospect opening out before him of giving life to a great creation.

The story of the production is a little romance of the theatre. So carefully and minutely had Martin Harvey thought of himself as Pelleas that he and Mrs Harvey had designed the dress worn in the production, and since a part of the *Pelleas and Melisande* properties, now that it has gone into the actor's repertoire.

" I mention this," he told me one day, " because of a strange incident arising out of it. Maeterlinck himself had not seen Pelleas take physical shape. To him the boy was even then but a dream. Maeterlinck told my wife that when he saw my Pelleas his eyes filled with tears. To him I was Pelleas. Maeterlinck felt someone knew the part almost better than himself. At the time we were preparing *Pelleas* for London, a production had been planned for Paris. Trouble had originated over the costume

Pelleas should wear. Design after design had been rejected. Maeterlinck was not suited, but could not say why, nor could he indicate how the part should be dressed. Maeterlinck could not visualise Pelleas or say how he should look. I took it as a very high compliment to my reading of the part—I still treasure it as a happy memory—that Maeterlinck accepted the design for the costume by myself and Mrs Harvey, which she afterwards made, as the model for the Paris production, and reproduced it down to the slightest detail. Even so late as the performance given by Madame Maeterlinck in the open, in beautiful grounds about their residence, they borrowed the costume I wore first as Pelleas and still wear now."

Mr Harvey loves to talk of the production of *Pelleas*. I should fancy, though he has never said so, that he was happier in the creation of Pelleas than in anything he has ever done. The part is so much akin to the personality of the actor. He tells delightful stories of his nervous desire to present a perfect Pelleas and a reading which would illuminate the part for Maeterlinck's English admirers.

"I remember the day of the dress rehearsal," he said, speaking of the days leading to the production. "How thrilled I was when I heard Maeterlinck himself had come over and was actually in the theatre. I think I must have felt as Garrick confessed to feeling when he heard Pope was in his theatre. I know I could not resist looking from behind the curtain into the dim-lit theatre and wondering which of the shadowy people I could see was Maeterlinck. At last I stole to a private box, and, looking down, saw several people in the stalls. Instinctively I recognised the author of the most beautiful play I know, and I recall the sense I had, as the play went on, that he comprised my entire audience.

"Well, the play was finished and the dress rehearsal over. I had been over-anxious to express all I thought Maeterlinck's Pelleas meant to me. After the performance I got away quietly, feeling strangely wretched and miserable, though I was convinced I had expressed all I had ever read into Pelleas. I suppose the exaltation of playing a part I had dreamt of creating for years, and the strain of giving my reading before the man I admired before all of his contemporaries as a writer, accounted for my exhaustion. I know I was tired, out of spirits, and very depressed. We were living in Baker Street at that time, and I walked home alone. I felt so miserable that, instead of going straight to our rooms, I walked up and down Baker Street for an hour, in the rain and the gloom. When I did decide to enter the house, I shall never forget my delight. My wife came forward to greet me, and breathlessly told me that Maeterlinck was waiting in one of our rooms, impatient to see Pelleas. He had taken a cab and driven straight from the theatre with Alfred Sutro. Maeterlinck could not speak much English, but through Mr Sutro I learnt he was more than pleased with my performance. He had been telling my wife what he had thought about it. 'Maeterlinck,' she said, ' has paid you the highest compliment one man has ever paid to another. He says you have stolen his soul.' "

IV

It is grim work looking over dramatic criticism which has aged ten years. I have a file of old press cuttings before me containing all written and said of the production of *Pelleas*. I do not purpose, as this book is in no sense a final estimate of Mr Harvey's work, to inflict quotations from the pile of criticism which I have read with more than ordinary interest.

The reception of *Pelleas* was not quite unanimous, but wonderfully appreciative. Many fine things were said at the time of Mr Forbes Robertson's Golaud, Mrs Patrick Campbell's Melisande, and Mr Harvey's Pelleas. No need to quote them here. Of Martin Harvey's Pelleas all I need say of this early opinion is that, when the critics praised, adulation rolled in pæans, and when they did not praise, disapprobation broke with the ominous sound of the cracking of a whiplash. Looking back, the criticism clears itself into two unmistakable points of view. There were people who did not like Pelleas, and said so, and there were people who seemed to have found in Martin Harvey's art something approaching revelation. One might further add, a dispassionate examination reveals the simple truth that the men who stood for advancement in the art of the theatre in 1898, who brought earnestness and insight to their work, stood solidly behind the young actor. Robert Buchanan, no mean judge of the beautiful, said, "I could see Maeterlinck's balcony scene a thousand times as interpreted by Mrs Campbell and Mr Martin Harvey, and I should always feel the very heart of love was beating near me." Side by side with this judgment one may set a representative phrase or two from the opposition. *The Pall Mall Gazette* said: "The love-making of Mr Martin Harvey was very prettily done, but who could be sorry when he was stabbed."

It is a little more than ten years since Martin Harvey first played Pelleas, and the critics disputed over the beauty of the play. Maeterlinck's work was given for a series of six matinees, and no serious attempt had been made to revive this beautiful creation. Commercially, it did not spell profit to think of putting *Pelleas* into an evening bill. Perhaps the play puzzled the theatre-goers of that day. The beauty then brought to the theatre had to be a little obvious before it was keenly appreciated. Many things have happened to Martin Harvey since those days. He has had his triumphs and vicissitudes, but it should be counted as one of the flowers of his association with the stage that he remains loyal to his ideals. I have seen him play Pelleas in Liverpool and Manchester, and for a season at a time he has submitted the play regularly to audiences throughout the country. He has lavished taste, thought and skill on developing all the beauty, hidden and revealed, in this, Maeterlinck's most representative work. To his Pelleas, the Melisande of our day is Miss N. de Silva. Melisande is one of the most beautiful things Mrs Harvey has achieved—perhaps only challenged by her exquisite moments as Ophelia, an intensely simple and touching realisation of grief turned to madness. Mr Frank Dyall is the Golaud, in close sympathy with the author’s meaning and the actor’s intention. Throughout the provinces these three players have carried *Pelleas and Melisande* to a great triumph. The dream play is now a sustained, finely balanced realisation of beauty, almost intangible in word, action and movement. One of the triumphs of Martin Harvey’s life has certainly been his power to present constantly, against all the disadvantages of travel and changing conditions arising in different theatres, a noble tribute to his early admiration for Maeterlinck. Down to the slightest detail, his *Pelleas and Melisande* of to-day remains the most artistically satisfying presentation of Maeterlinck’s play. That it is mobile and can be produced anywhere; can be taken to the people dwelling in industrial centres, where the artist has not hitherto thrived, is perhaps one of the splendours of the achievement. *Pelleas*, superbly played in a scenic atmosphere intensely beautiful, to audiences drawn from districts concerned with the production of cotton, iron or coal, is a revelation of the place the art of the theatre may some day occupy in the lives of the people—and perhaps it also serves as a prophecy.

CHAPTER XVI

PREPARING "THE ONLY WAY"—A LABOUR OF LOVE—FIRST STEPS TOWARDS ACTOR-MANAGEMENT—MR JOHN LEIGH AND THE YOUNG ACTOR—A SUCCESS AND A DISAPPOINTMENT—MARTIN HARVEY TAKES THE LYCEUM—MR BRAM STOKER AND THE RENT—REHEARSING THE GREAT PLAY—A LYCEUM FIRST NIGHT—THROUGH IRVING'S PRIVATE DOOR—THE RECEPTION OF "THE ONLY WAY"

I

THE success of *Pelleas* led almost directly to the production of a play which has been closely associated with the rise of Martin Harvey. I refer, of course, to the version of Dickens' "A Tale of Two Cities," known by almost every playgoer as *The Only Way*. The young actor had made great progress at the Lyceum, and, since withdrawing, audiences had been more than kind, while the reception of *Pelleas* marked Martin Harvey out as a player with a future. Conditions had begun to shape themselves so that the production of *The Only Way* began to appear more than a possibility devoutly to be hoped for. From first to last, from inception to production, and from the day of its first appearance until to-day, the story of *The Only Way* and the vicissitudes the play under-went before settling down into a great triumph for the actor who produced it, has about it the making of a great romance.

I have already explained how the idea originated. Mrs Harvey, while touring in America, saw a vision of a drama built upon "A Tale of Two Cities," and also saw the life of the ill-fated Sidney Carton as a great acting opportunity for her husband, if the day ever came when he should need a powerful character part, to open up a career as his own manager. At the time, all this was unlikely. Martin Harvey and his wife were still members of Sir Henry Irving's company, and the prospects of his success as an actor manager were indeed remote—so visionary, in fact, that it was more than doubtful whether he would ever mount the preliminary steps leading to such an opportunity.

The character of Sidney Carton as drawn in "A Tale of Two Cities" appealed with equal force to Martin Harvey's dramatic sense. Both the player and his wife were young and enthusiastic, keen to make opportunity for themselves, eager to advance in the profession of their choice. Though there seemed no earthly chance of either of the pair ever being able to produce *The Only Way*, the suggestion thrown out by Mrs Harvey did not receive the fate of most good ideas—which is to be cast into oblivion. Most people have valuable ideas from time to time, but, conditions being against carrying them into immediate effect, they are usually forgotten.

The idea of dramatising "A Tale of Two Cities" appealed as strongly to Martin Harvey as it had done to his wife, and, though the chances of such a bid for favour did not seem bright, it was not forgotten. Indeed, without any hope of being able to produce it, the young people went on their way rejoicing in the task of preparing the drama. After all, *if* an opportunity came along, they would at least be ready with the play. And so they were. Years elapsed between the time Mrs Harvey thought of *The Only Way* and Martin Harvey produced the version they had constructed, but the work of preparation went on all the time. As soon as Irving's company reached England, Mr Harvey consulted the Rev. Freeman Wills, a brother of Mr W. G. Wills, whose work in connection with many Lyceum productions — *Olivia*, *Charles I.*, *Vanderdecken*, *Faust*, and *Eugene Aram*—will be remembered by playgoers. A rough scenario and an outline of the desires of Martin Harvey and his wife were given to the dramatist, and he promised to begin work on the play.

" We chose Freeman Wills as our dramatist because he was the brother of the better-known dramatist, Mr W. G. Wills, and it was understood that they collaborated together. I had produced *An Old Song* on one of our early vacation tours, by the Rev. Freeman Wills and Fitzmaurice King, and the latter, I found, later in life, was a *nom-de-plume* used by Canon Langbridge. All this encouraged me to go to Freeman Wills, but not until some years after did I learn from Canon Langbridge that he himself had done considerable work on the earlier MS. of *The Only Way*."

The first MS. copy, as it came from the Rev. Freeman Wills, was the basis of the play we know to-day, but it can scarcely be called the drama finally produced by Martin Harvey. During the years between his Lyceum days and the production of *The Only Way*, Martin Harvey and his wife worked on the draft of the play in their possession, with patient care for, and devotion to, their joint idea. When not playing, together they sat over the script, altering, reconstructing and revising. It was an unnamed play for most of these years. One of the most successful incidents in the drama only went into the piece as an afterthought. The most thrilling moment of the play, the tribunal scene in which Sidney Carton addresses the revolutionary mob, was written into the act at the last moment. Not until the play was in active rehearsal was the speech composed and inserted —it was introduced within a fortnight of the date set apart for the production, and even then the author of the play did not approve of the innovation.

Year after year, Mr and Mrs Harvey worked on this play. When the drama had taken definite shape, they began to test it privately line by line, and speech by speech. Scenery was modelled and the grouping of the characters and the crowds was patiently worked out. When Martin Harvey had leisure, he went off to his study and worked on the beloved play. His absorption in the task became a jest to the family circle. When Martin Harvey was wanted for this or that matter arising out of the routine of the small household, he could not be found. He was usually discovered working on his play, and reluctant to leave it. "Bother the old play," became a standing phrase in the Harvey household, and its inmates soon began to disapprove of the amount of time the head of the family was giving to the great idea.

Looking back, Martin Harvey is of opinion that it was due to the years spent in the preparation of *The Only Way* that the chances of success became so certain. To him it became an intimate, living thing, almost as dear as a first child. As an actor, sometimes disengaged and often with leisure on his hands, all his spare time was given to the play. Every line and situation was weighed and tested, discussed with Mrs Harvey, chiselled and perfected. To the words of the dramatist, Martin Harvey brought the ripe experience of an actor trained in the larger manner of the Lyceum, and the knowledge he had consciously absorbed of stage management by watching Sir Henry Irving at work upon his productions. Long before there was a possibility of producing this play, so carefully thought out and prepared, Martin Harvey had elaborated Sidney Carton down to every detail of his dress and make-up, while, as the possible producer, he had also determined the place of every character in the play, and the way it should be produced. Just as he had been steeped in Pelleas before the production of

Maeterlinck's play at the Prince of Wales Theatre was mooted, so also had he absorbed the dramatic possibilities of Dickens' "A Tale of Two Cities." He was ready for the work in advance of the day set apart for its production.

II

Such patient devotion to a fine idea bore its reward in due course. After the success of *Pelleas*, the dream of management first rooted in Martin Harvey's mind years before, during his tours with the Lyceum Company, began to stir again, and would not be silenced. More and more did he desire to be the arbiter of his own fortunes, to select the plays he would like to produce and the parts he would like to play. Less and less did he feel inclined to be at the mercy of other actor managers, to wait the opportunities they gave him as an actor, to submit his artistic destiny to the chance calls of theatrical necessities. There is a moment in the life of every "leading man," as the successful actor is called in his own profession, when he cannot take his career any further as an independent player. He becomes subject to the selection of plays by other men and their choice of him to fill such parts as they care to give him. The player in this position has no control over his own destiny. He is at the parting of the ways, and if he desire to go on to triumphs conceived on a bolder plan, he must take the leap, enter the whirlpool of management for himself, and in the struggle fight for the right of playing the parts he feels are necessary to his artistic development.

Such was the position of Martin Harvey after his creation of Pelleas. At that moment, too, the thought of the play, carefully studied, prepared with loving care, and waiting idly in the cabinet where it reposed in his house, constantly crossed his mind. The completed drama clamoured for production. Martin Harvey cast about for ways and means, but did not see exactly how *The Only Way* was to find a place in the theatre. At last, in despair, he decided to take a suburban theatre for a week and put the play on, experimentally, financing it out of his own savings. He had the vague hope that its merits would be obvious enough to justify a short provincial tour, at the least. And that was also about the most he dared to hope.

Speaking of these days, Martin Harvey told me how the play finally came to be produced with the help of Mr John Leigh.

" Years before, an old friend had advised me to go to Mr John Leigh if I ever wanted assistance in my professional career. At that time, I did not think of the advice—I had no play and was not contemplating a career as a manager. But before *The Only Way* was produced I had become acquainted with Mr Leigh. Every man who knows the personalities that count in the world of London theatres knows Mr John Leigh. At that time he was, as he is now, a close student of the Elizabethan drama, and steeped in the history of the theatre to his finger-tips. He was also well known to the public as a Shakespearian reader, and his recitals were, for many years, a feature of the dramatic seasons. We became very good friends, and I loved to go to his house. Mr Leigh had a very fine collection of theatrical prints; he was an enthusiastic art collector, and had amongst other treasures a service of silver given to Charles Kean. I began to go to Brynaston Street, where Mr Leigh had his home, and enjoyed many long and delightful chats there. Mr Leigh was very sympathetic. I used to tell him what I hoped to do, and he was always most encouraging, though I think his interest in the theatre was largely concerned with his beloved Shakespeare. He was a very charming acquaintance, and developed into a very good friend.

" When the play began to take shape I thought of Mr Leigh. I do not believe he was much interested in what I had to say. I had the loan of a suburban theatre for a week. The date was fixed—I was determined to use the week for a production of *The Only Way.* I went to Mr Leigh and told him of this and asked him to embark a little on the production.

" 'What will it run to ?' Mr Leigh asked.

" 'About seventy-five pounds,' I replied.

" I shall never forget my delight when Mr Leigh consented to assist. I remember going to my wife and saying, 'John Leigh has done it; John Leigh has done it!' I saw my play produced, and of course believed it would be a great success. And then I was face to face with what appeared to me then to be the greatest disaster of my life—though I lived to know it as one of the greatest blessings. The man who had lent me his theatre withdrew his promise in order to oblige another friend, and my one chance of production was gone. With a sense of depression which haunts me to this day, I sat down and wrote to John Leigh, returning his cheque for seventy-five pounds.

" Some time after, when I had recovered from my disappointment, the Lyceum was vacant for a short period. Suddenly, the idea occurred to me—why not play a bold stroke, take the Lyceum and do *The Only Way* there? At once, I went off and wired to Mr Leigh asking him to support me. The idea appealed to him, and he telegraphed back 'Yes.' I wired to Mr Leigh because he had been a frequenter of the Lyceum, a great admirer of its traditions, and would most likely be interested in the theatre itself. I set about arranging the tenancy of the Lyceum, and at once entered into communication with the late Mr Bram Stoker. I met both Stoker and Loveday. They were glad of a tenant, and entered heartily into the idea. The lease for the vacant weeks was arranged, and I became the tenant of the Lyceum. I was the last manager to occupy the theatre under Irving's lesseeship. My agreement was with Irving, and, shortly after, the Lyceum became a public company and the theatre passed out of the hands of

Martin Harvey working out a Play

Irving, though his connection with the scene of many triumphs did not cease for some time after.

"I had my theatre; I had the play; there was Mr Leigh ready to finance me, and the preparations were well advanced. Even then the whole project threatened to collapse. Irving was preparing *Robespierre* for the Lyceum, and one of the great scenes was to take place in the tribunal. Almost at the last moment, the new Lyceum management discovered that the production of a play with a tribunal scene in it, almost immediately before the *Robespierre* play, would prejudice the interests of the new production. Representations were made to Sir Henry Irving, and he wrote asking me to reconsider my intentions in connection with *The Only Way* from the point of view of a friend. I doubted then that it was too late. We had engaged the people, the scenery was painted, and the announcements were out. It was a very anxious moment for me. I should have given up the whole thing but for my wife. I felt I could scarcely go ahead with an enterprise which would put difficulties in the way of my old chief at the Lyceum. My feeling was to retire, but Mrs Harvey did not approve of such a course of action. She drove off to Mr Leigh, and asked him to hold me to my arrangement, and Mr Leigh's opinion was that things had gone too far for me to retire.

"The situation was very difficult. Finally, I met Comyns Carr, Loveday and Bram Stoker, and the whole matter was discussed by us. Stoker cleared the situation in his brusque Irish way. ‘ It’s not a question of sentiment ; it’s a question of rent,’ I remember him saying, in his bluff way, ‘ and we want the rent. We have to decide whether we have the rent or no play ? ’ He delivered the verdict himself, after a brief pause, by adding : ‘ And, begad, we’ll have our rent.’ And they took it. The last difficulty in the way of the production of *The Only Way* had been removed. After the interview, I wrote to Irving and told him how the matter stood. He wrote to me at once, ‘ Go ahead, and good luck.’ On the night of the production, Irving sent me a very encouraging message containing words of cheer for which I was deeply grateful. They came when I needed such a message most.”

III

“ Well, *The Only Way* went forward. Time was very short. The scenery was hurried through the studios. Hawes Craven did all the scenes he could undertake, while Walter Hann and John Harker also helped us. The production, once decided upon, was hurried through in a very short time. The Lyceum being in the occupation of the Carl Rosa Opera Company at the moment, we could not rehearse there. Most of our rehearsals were conducted at the ‘ Old Vic,’ on the Surrey side, but as a matter of fact, while we were rehearsing the play in one place, Espinoza, the master of the ballet, was drilling the crowds in another. We had decided to call the play *Sidney Carton*, and here another little contretemps occurred. Edward Compton came down and pointed out that he had a play called *Sidney Carton, or a Tale of Two Cities*. Another deadlock. At the last moment, we had to discard the title. Eagerly, we cast about for new ones, and none of them seemed to fit. Then my wife, who always thinks to the most purpose in a case of grave emergency, suddenly asked: 'Why not call it *The Only Way*?' We did not think further. *The Only Way* the play became from that minute, and I think the final naming of the piece was one of the most successful moments of inspiration we had in all those troublous days.

"I had no difficulty in allotting the parts of *The Only Way*, and called on many of my old associates at the Lyceum, who very willingly put their hands to the plough to make the hastily rehearsed drama a success. Mr Acton Bond was M. le Marquis de St Evremonde, the late Robert Taber had the strong part of Citizen Defarge allotted to him, but owing to illness, Mr Holbrook Blinn had to take up the character. He came to us fresh from the wonderful success he achieved in *The Cat and the Cherub*, and gave a great performance as Defarge. Mr Ben Webster came to play the Count de Fauchet, the noble who goes to his death in the grand manner, which he sustained perfectly. Mr Herbert Sleath was my Charles Darnay and Mr F. Tyars made a wonderful President in the tribunal scene. Last, Sam Johnson, the most delightful of comedians, played Mr Stryver, and found universal favour. Amongst the ladies were Miss Grace Warner, a graceful Lucy Manette, Miss Marriot, who was 'The Vengeance' of the first days, and, last, Miss N. de Silva as Mimi.

"Don't think for a moment because time was short and everything had to be rushed that there was any confusion in the production of *The Only Way*. On the contrary, we had thought over it so long, that every detail of the production was in my mind, and the willing friends who came to me for the production soon absorbed the spirit of the drama. Despite all the difficulties, the play was in good trim when the first night approached. I remember those days of preparation as an anxious and difficult time—a period of great strain and stress. But I was happy in having the opportunity of producing an idea which had absorbed us for years, and was ready for it when the opening occurred."

IV

"I shall always remember some of my sensations on that first night. I think, apart from the pleasure of producing the play, I had many moments of delight, softened by great regrets, in that I was back at the Lyceum. I knew I looked back on all the years I had spent at the Lyceum—the theatre of great traditions. I thought, too, of the long reign just coming to a close and the consciousness of it was the only shadow on my path at that moment. As I walked into the theatre, through the door Sir Henry Irving had used habitually, and sat in his dressing-room, my mind was busy with the past. That I should be at the Lyceum seemed to me almost a strange dream, out of which I should awaken. I recalled Ellen Terry's comment when she heard I had taken the Lyceum. 'What, little Jack Harvey fill the Lyceum!' she said, in terms rich with good-humoured doubt, which ended in a laugh.

"For the first night everything was with us. The first night of a Lyceum production had grown to be a tradition. Irving always made a social function of the initial performances and one grew to be familiar with his first-night gatherings. You expected to see the same people in the same places. Sir Henry Irving was kind enough to allow me the use of his first-night plan, and we invited all who had been accustomed to attend Irving's opening performances. The result was a 'first night' much as we older players from the Lyceum had been accustomed to see, with all the old faces in the old places."

To bring the story of the actual production of *The Only Way* to a close, little need be told now. It is so easily within the memory of the younger school of playgoers. The Lyceum audience, cold before the spectacle of a first night in the theatre of many memories with Irving away from the stage he had made his own, was frigid at the end of the first act, but warmed up as scene followed scene and revealed the purpose of the players and the fine dramatic material into which they were putting such artistic effort. The theatre grew more electric as the night wore on, and when the revolutionary tribunal, with its bold effects, fine speeches and highly convincing handling of turbulent crowds, carried the play to its greatest moment, artistic success was assured. The play passed on to the closing scenes amid a *furore* of applause. Mimi, the character named at the last moment, had suddenly grown, and had fastened a hold on the sympathies of the audience which has never since relaxed. Martin Harvey's last phrases, uttered in the final tableau, held the great audience until the fall of the curtain. For the first time, upon the ears of theatre-goers fell the haunting words of Sidney Carton, beautiful in their simplicity, producing their measured final effect, hopeful in its very sadness. " It is a far, far better thing that I do, than I have ever done ; it is a far, far better rest that I go to than I have ever known."

No need to-day to tell of the chorus of praise which followed the production of *The Only Way*. As the critic of *The Morning Post* said the next morning : " Throughout the five acts not a dissentient voice was heard, and allowing for the friendliness of feeling inseparable from a first-night assembly, the enthusiasm rang out firm and true." In terms not entirely complete in their agreement, but unanimously cordial, the press of that day hailed a new actor who had worked laboriously to success.

CHAPTER XVII

AFTER "THE ONLY WAY"—OTHER DRAMATIC VERSIONS—SOME COINCIDENCES—DICKENS AND SIDNEY CARTON—CRITICS AND MARTIN HARVEY—AN OPINION BY MAX BEERBOHM—EARLIER DAYS OF MANAGEMENT—MARTIN HARVEY ON ACTING AND THE CHOICE OF PLAYS—A TALK WITH MRS HARVEY—MIMI AND THE WORK-GIRLS—SOME STRANGE GIFTS—TWO TRAGIC STORIES—"THAT IS NOT WHAT MIMI WOULD HAVE DONE"—AN INTERESTING RECORD

I

THE more than favourable impression made by *The Only Way* on the night of its production, was confirmed during its run at the Lyceum, and later when the play was transferred to the Prince of Wales Theatre. It became evident the bold card thrown on the table by the ambitious actor had been wisely chosen. From that day to this, he has held his own amongst the actor managers, and, subject to vicissitudes by the way, has steadily advanced in prestige.

That Martin Harvey should have succeeded in arresting the attention of the theatre-going public, and holding it afterwards, with *The Only Way*, has been a matter of surprise to many critics. It has been the custom to say of the theatre that a sad and sombre play cannot succeed, and that Dickens spells ruin as dramatic fare. The record of *The Only Way* may not prove the theatrical wiseacres are wrong, but if it does not, it is certainly a tribute to the actor's power of holding his audiences. Sad and sombre plays do not please the public, or draw audiences, as a rule ; but the fact remains *The Only Way* is a sad and sombre play. Once the earlier comedy scenes with Stryver and Defarge are over, *The Only Way* marches on to its inevitable and tragic end, with scarcely a glimpse of humour to relieve the strain. Again, Dickens, on the modern stage, has not been very successful in riveting his hold on audiences, but the popularity of *The Only Way* may prove that, given sympathetic dramatisation, there is as great an audience awaiting Dickens in the theatre as the novelist has outside it, amongst the reading public of our own time. If this is not true, then the triumph of the actor is all the greater, for the play's popularity must then have depended largely on Martin Harvey's art. Undoubtedly, to-day, *The Only Way* has more vitality than any other dramatic version of the novelist's work.

Incidentally, in passing, it might be said, the idea of making a drama from " A Tale of Two Cities " was by no means a new one. There was, of course, the ancient controversy over the " Dead Heart," and the similarity of some of the incidents of the play to the actual working out of Dickens' story. Into this dispute I need not enter here, beyond saying temper rose high and considerable bitterness ensued. Since the publication of " A Tale of Two

Cities," the rehave been several attempts to make plays out of the novel. There was a version prepared by Tom Taylor, in which Dickens interested himself. Those who love coincidence will be interested in the fact that Tom Taylor's version was produced in 1860 at the Lyceum—the scene of Martin Harvey's triumph—where it met with considerable success. Perhaps the most notable version of the book, prior to *The Only Way*, was the one entitled *All for Her*. It was produced by John Clayton in 1875, and is said to have been one of his greatest successes. Coincidence goes a little further in the matter, for in 1883, John Clayton revived this version at the Court Theatre, where Mr Harvey fulfilled his first engagement. There were other versions, more interesting to the Dickensian than to students of the development of Martin Harvey as an actor. This much may safely be said—the dramatic possibilities of the book have been freely recognised by playwrights.

Undoubtedly, *The Only Way* is an actor's play, and it is worth noting that Dickens saw the book in the same light. He loved the stage, was familiar with its surroundings, and ever hankered after triumphs in the theatre. In his own mind, he turned over the idea of doing for Sidney Carton what Martin Harvey has done so many years after his death. Mr S. J. A. Fitz-Gerald, in his interesting book on Dickens and the Drama, quotes Dickens, writing of Sidney Carton, as saying: "When I was acting with my children and friends in Mr Wilkie Collins' drama of *The Frozen Deep* I first conceived the main idea of the story. A strong desire was upon me then to embody it in my own person; and I traced out in my fancy the state of mind of which it would necessitate the presentation to an observant spectator with particular care and interest. . . . As the idea became familiar to me, it gradually shaped itself into its present form. Throughout its execution it had complete possession of me; I have so far verified what is done and suffered in these pages, as that I have certainly done and suffered it for myself." This is an interesting sidelight on the creation of the story; more interesting still when one remembers that, in the same manner and spirit, Martin Harvey approached the task of visualising a character Dickens only saw in the dream process of exercising his creative faculty.

The history of *The Only Way*, so far as its public presentation is concerned, is almost recent theatrical history, and as it is an episode of theatrical history which has been watched closely by thousands of admirers, very little more about the career of the play need be said here. *The Only Way* has had its vicissitudes. It did better at the Prince of Wales Theatre than at the Lyceum, from a financial point of view. During the first tour of the provinces, the play was not so well received as it was when taken to the country for the second time. The quality of *The Only Way* is its vitality. The longer it is played, the greater seems its hold upon audiences. First admired; it is to-day cherished and holds a wonderful place in the affections of the public. As time goes on, *The Only Way* mellows as a performance, and in it Martin Harvey gives a reading which improves as his knowledge, experience and powers of expression increase in maturity. The production brought Martin Harvey fame in a day; a secure position amongst leading actors; many influential friends, who began to take an increasing interest in his work and social recognition in almost every quarter where the artist is recognised. In the years which have followed, *The Only Way* has brought the actor more than all the foregoing influences put together. The play has been the foundation on which he has built the rest of his work, and has taken him so close to the hearts of a big public that what in earlier days was a vogue is now a tie amounting to a profound affection.

II

Critics reproached Martin Harvey, at the time of the production of *The Only Way*, for going back to drama popular in its appeal and strongly theatrical in its best moments. To a few, who professed admiration for the art of the theatre only when it deals with the higher literary forms of dramatic writing, Martin Harvey's revelation of the exquisite delicacy of his treatment of Pelleas was a great delight. His production of *The Only Way*, with its strong direct appeal to the popular imagination, was considered a retrograde step by a small minority of critical writers, and their depreciation of the production made itself heard above the general chorus of approval proceeding from the press.

This type of criticism was ably represented by the irrepressible " Max " in *The Saturday Review* of those days. Shortly after the production of *The Only Way*, and referring specifically to a triple bill presented by Martin Harvey, as a continuation of his career as a manager, " Max " wrote : " These sweet, beautiful, heartrending parts are all very well up to a certain point. But a young man of Mr Harvey's talent should not confine himself to them for ever. To dissolve the dress circle in tears may be very gratifying, but it should not be the exclusive ambition of any mime—especially not one who has the power to do things very well."

About the same time Mr William Archer, taking a slightly different standpoint, had the same advice to offer. Of the triple bill he wrote : " How could the manager who had the insight to be charmed by the delicate unconventional poetry of *Ib and Little Christina* fail to see through the commonplace fustian of *Rouget de l'Isle*. . . . It is rather dispiriting to find a young manager like Mr Harvey putting such hopelessly pretentious work on the stage." These two quotations may be taken as typical of a note which creeps into the critical reception of popular successes.

Into the wars of dramatic critics I do not presume to enter, but reading this sort of thunder to-day it does not roll so terrifically as it did, when it was first written. In reviewing these judgments, it is just as well to remember that Martin Harvey had been but a few months in management. *The Only Way* had its vicissitudes; *Don Juan*, following it, was a costly failure, and, faced with the problem of going on as an actor manager, the triple bill so criticised was largely brought forward to stave off disaster. This bill included *Ib and Little Christina*, a delightful fantasy, by Capt. Basil Hood, of which Mr Archer approved; *Rouget de l'Isle*, theatrical and popular in its appeal, but containing one situation which justifies its production down to this day, and *A Pantomime Rehearsal*. A great popular success with the work of one of the great authors everyone delights to honour—the Dickens centenary proves the vitality of the author of "A Tale of Two Cities"—and an ambitious failure in *Don Juan*, together with this triple bill, formed the young manager's record when these criticisms were made. One might reasonably say that it was not a bad record; that the plays presented through a period of vicissitudes showed a lofty conception of a manager's duty in one so young, and that the list compares favourably with the aims of any young actor placed in the same circumstances. Also, one might add that, to accuse an earnest young actor, hardly across the threshold of his career, in swaddling clothes as a manager, fighting forces of which the outside public recked but little, of being false to his ideals was—shall we say?—a little premature. Even at the time, the record was a good one; given the same circumstances, the same note in criticism might be levelled with more force at an actor manager approaching the end of his career, who had indeed fallen short of his ideals through every year of a long professional life.

Martin Harvey himself does not take this attitude. He is neither sore under criticism nor does he put himself on his defence. In going over the press criticism of the period, I pointed these out to him. He took up an attitude which perhaps explains his purpose better, without attempting to answer his critics.

" My game in this world is acting," he said, talking over criticism in general, " and not necessarily the exploitation of literature. The people who blame me for the material I use forget that the material—good or bad—is chosen because it gives me opportunities to practise my art—the art of acting. While critics with a certain outlook may not agree, in actual practice there are plays—sometimes inferior material if you like—which give me greater opportunities as an actor than some of the plays my critics constantly expect me to produce. My business in life is acting, and not the exploitation of dramatists, and my concern is to provide myself with good parts to play. All this accounts for the fact that great actors have made reputations in indifferent work. Personally, I choose *Rouget de l'Isle* as an actor because it is an actor's opportunity, and in the same week I delight in playing *Hamlet.* There is no comparison between the two plays as literature, but I could not play *Hamlet* all the time. I have to take the opportunities available, and *Rouget de l'Isle* serves its turn."

Personally, knowing the subject of this book as I do, I would add, the actor makes important reservations which he does not utter either to his friends, or in answer to his critics. If I know Martin Harvey at all, I would say that if he is ever impatient it is when circumstances, the iron laws of theatre finance, cannot be bent to his will as easily as he would like. He seems to care but little for financial success. He lives simply and quietly, goes about very little nowadays in society, maintains a charming home, which by no means approaches the ostentatious, and is at work about the theatre, in or out of town, all the year round. A financial success in his career produces only one effect on Martin Harvey. A long cherished dream of playing still another part which has appealed to him takes shape. To further his artistic dreams, he does not take the ordinary financial precautions which guide the average successful business man. When the season is successful, and Mr Frank O'Neill, his business manager, shows the sinews of war are there, the company goes into action, led by Martin Harvey, and the result is a new play. It may or may not be a financial success. Frequently, it is not. Always the new play is the conscientious effort of an artist, not reckless of consequences, but certainly disdainful of the laws of theatrical enterprise which curb his ambition to express himself. Before I reach the end of this series of pictures, I hope to give a full list of Martin Harvey's achievements as a manager. The merit of the work he has produced, its varied appeal, the length of the list, are all justifications of his career. The success of *The Only Way* makes one think of Martin Harvey and Sidney Carton almost automatically. As a matter of fact, only once or twice a week is *The Only Way* in the bill—when the play is given oftener there are usually special circumstances.

III

Before leaving *The Only Way*, I would like to recall a delightful conversation I had with Mrs Harvey a few months ago. I believe it was in Manchester, but a touring management moves on unconscious of its surroundings, and one city is very much like another in the daily routine.

Mrs Harvey, I should say here, takes her work in the theatre very seriously—when in the theatre—but few people would know it. She is delightfully feminine, and has the feminine gift of doing many things well, with a more wonderful habit of passing from one achievement to the other almost unconsciously. She will talk of her varied work at the theatre, produce fine needlework, keep her Skye terriers in order, and act as your hostess all at the same time. If she did not happen to talk of the theatre—which is more than likely—you would scarcely think of her as a delightful Ophelia, or, flying to an opposite extreme, an actress whose Mimi has possibly had a wider influence on the public than any woman's part ever played.

Glimpses of this curious fascination of Mimi for playgoers came out in the talk we had that afternoon. I asked her, remembering how often she had played the part, if she still enjoyed repeating it. Her eyes lit with great pleasure, as the embroidery she worked upon began to shape itself out into another petal of a flower.

" Like the part ? " Mrs Harvey said. " Why, yes. How can I help but like it ? It meant so much to us through so many years when it did not matter to anyone but ourselves. Its growth was bound up with some very happy years. The production of *The Only Way* was not, to me, the happiest part, though its instantaneous grip of the public was dramatic enough to satisfy anyone. We scored our first triumph in *The Only Way*, but it brought cares, responsibilities and worries of management which have never since ceased. For my husband, the play has meant much hard work, directly and indirectly, and with management the old, carelessly happy life we led in Cockspur Street practically ceased. Mr Harvey passed from the days which can be so pleasant for the young actor, into management, without seeming to know it. He is rather an unworldly man, and, his responsibilities grew and grew, and, almost unconscious of them, he has gone on shouldering the heavier burdens. The result is as you see him to-day—a man entirely absorbed in his work. And here we are playing and preparing all the year round, and that, with an occasional hour with our friends, is the sum total of our lives."

"About Mimi ?" I prompted.

"About Mimi—why, yes. Well, that is what Mimi or *The Only Way* has meant to us. It is the play in which we have been most closely associated. And one must like the part—Mimi has brought me so many friends. I don't suppose any woman's part has endeared itself so much to the public—certainly no part I have played ever produced the same effect. I think the tie between the audience and the player grows stronger every year, and every time I play the part I get more and more convincing proofs.

"It touches me often to see these proofs; so many of them come from poor people, work-girls, shop-girls, girls who live hard lives, in which there can be but little colour. Mimi seems to mean much to them. There is so much love in the world unused, and unrecognised—wasting itself in years of self-sacrifice. Mimi, I think, means much to these loveless ones.

"These poor people—they send me little things. Perhaps a bunch of flowers—sometimes they are fading. Some grow flowers in window boxes, and write and say they have sacrificed perhaps the only colour in their lives for me. And because I've indiscreetly said I like certain flowers, they write and tell me how they have grown these flowers, just to give them to me. They leave these bouquets without a word at the stage door; sometimes they write. Now and again they wait for me, and shyly offer flowers as I pass out from the theatre. One poor girl wrote and told me how nothing gave her greater pride than the short white curtains in her little room. She had cut them up and made them, exquisitely sewn, into a pincushion, a nightdress-case, and a brush-and-comb bag. They were beautiful, but, like many of the gifts left at the theatre, though they have made me very proud, they have also made me just a little sad. And they give me odd little things. One girl left me a new-laid egg; another, in Yorkshire, proud of her cooking, baked me a cake. Yes, and they send me strange gifts for wear—odd bits of jewellery to bring me luck, old-fashioned personal ornaments, and trifles from the drapers. It is by such things I have learnt to know my audiences—to see them. Some of the strange things they offer are vivid sidelights thrown on the lives of the poor, and their daily sacrifice—shall I say abnegation?—of self. The world is full of Mimis.

" One of the queerest incidents arising out of the play makes almost a story. It is one of many such, and I have often thought of writing it. People used to come and see *The Only Way* time after time. They have written saying they have been twenty, thirty—even fifty—times. One brother and sister, by writing of their visits to the play, came to my attention so often that I felt I had begun to know them. They saw *The Only Way* over and over again. They seemed to find great pleasure in it. One of the strange things they did was to visit the play and memorise it. They sent me a book with the words of *The Only Way* written in it very neatly from memory, with illustrations depicting the scenery of the play. I was astonished by their accuracy—there were very few mistakes. From time to time, I used to get enthusiastic letters from this boy and girl, and now and again I wrote thanking them.

" One night, when we were playing *The Only Way* at the Apollo, I arrived home on a foggy November day, very tired after a matinee performance. Mr Harvey had not reached home. My maid told me a gentleman was waiting to see me, and added that he did not seem quite right. I went into the drawing-room and found a young man there, very hysterical and excited. He was throwing up his hands and crying, ' She's dead, she's dead.' I tried to comfort him as best I could, myself somewhat shaken by the strange experience. He told me his story, at length. His sister, a frail girl, had been ill from pneumonia, and had been asking daily to see me. She had died that afternoon, and this strangely excited young man—slightly unbalanced in his mind—had the idea she would not rest if the only wish she had expressed were not carried out. ' What would you like me to do ? ' I asked, and he replied, ' I'd like you to come back and see her.'

" It was a strange request, but I did not think of it in that light. Indeed, together we went off, driving through the streets in a hansom. Only when we began to travel gloomy, crowded streets did the thought suggest itself that I was travelling to an unknown destination with a madman. Well, we came to an old-fashioned shop front in a dismal street, and he stopped the cab. He opened the side door, and motioned me to precede him into the passage. When he followed and closed the door we were in total darkness. I think I was frightened then, but I went with him up several flights of stairs until we came to their room. They were home-workers, and the girl had lived where she had worked, and amongst many signs of it. Striking a match, he lit a lamp and then I saw the girl—lying dead upon her bed, in a room filled with boxes of materials and examples of completed work. I left some flowers I had brought and said all I could to help him. Then he told me what I had already guessed—they were the two young people who had copied out *The Only Way* from memory. He grew calmer as he told me, and at the end he accompanied me down the dark steps and saw me into my cab.

" That is one sad story of the influence *The Only Way* has had on people in distress. This is another quite as sad, but I think these incidents should be told. There was one little girl who came to see *The Only Way.* Her people were in a good position—more than well-to-do. She took a real fancy to me—she was without a mother, of whom she thought I reminded her. She was a child of seven or eight. Her father wrote, stating the girl was consumptive.

He explained that the joy of the child's life had been to see *The Only Way*. He asked me to write to her, saying that nothing he could do for the child would give her greater pleasure. I did so several times, and I had many sweet letters in return. Then the letters ceased, and later her father wrote, saying she was dead. He told me my letters had helped her, and the child's last words were—' Tell Mimi.' "

Later Mrs Harvey told me of the drawbacks of this sentiment from the professional standpoint of the actor manager and his wife.

" People do not separate Sidney Carton from Martin Harvey or Mimi from myself—especially the simpler playgoers. They imagine we live the life of the play. They identify us with the actual self-sacrifice of Sidney Carton and Mimi. This is very embarrassing, and has proved a difficult influence to fight. It makes the choice of plays very uncertain, and all our new plays have to fight their way against this strange influence. Mr Harvey in a new play, which presents him in a different light —say *The Breed of the Treshams*—offends some proportion of our audience at first. They simply will not reconcile his conduct in the new part with the exalted opinion they have formed of Sidney Carton. If I play comedy, I offend those gentle people who find Mimi their ideal. I am Mimi to them and when I play some part quite different they feel—and say—' That is not what Mimi would have done.' They love the old play, and we dare not change a button in the costumes. When I changed the

Miss "Bess" Harvey

colour of Mimi's dress, the protests were so many that the old costume had to be replaced exactly as before. All this is delightful," Mrs Harvey said, "but it makes the chances of our new plays very precarious. Few of our new plays succeed at once. They have to fight the popularity of the older favourites, and their acceptance takes time."

I remember our quiet little talk over *The Only Way* turned to more general subjects with the entrance of Miss "Bess" Harvey. Miss Harvey is a cousin of Martin Harvey. She has always toured and lived with the family, playing with the company and sharing Mrs Harvey's few social pleasures. She is a gentle, soft-spoken lady with a very quiet vein of humour, almost Dickensian in its sly, whimsical touch.

"Why, here comes Bess," said Mrs Harvey, rising to greet her. "Bess is the only one of us who has not missed a performance of *The Only Way*."

The new-comer with the restful voice and gently humorous manner was—one smiled to think about it—the terrible, crabbed, bent, old woman who croaks for blood amongst the mob in the tribunal scene.

CHAPTER XVIII

MANAGERIAL VICISSITUDES—"DON JUAN'S LAST WAGER"—A DIFFERENCE OF OPINION—A HOUSE WITH A HOO-DOO—THE TRIPLE BILL—THE END OF A TENANCY—MARTIN HARVEY IN THE CITY—"A CIGARETTE-MAKER'S ROMANCE"—A SECOND TOUR WITH "THE ONLY WAY"—"EUGENE ARAM"—"AFTER ALL"—A ROYAL COMMAND—AN AMERICAN TOUR—MARTIN HARVEY STRICKEN DOWN

I

THE career of Martin Harvey after *The Only Way* had finished its phenomenal run in town, was for two seasons a long fight against adverse conditions. While *The Only Way* had been an artistic success, it did not enrich the management during the London run, nor did the subsequent provincial tour, though the play made a deep and an abiding impression.

It was necessary, in order to advance the repute of the young management, to produce another compelling play in town, and both Mr and Mrs Harvey were enamoured with the famous story of *Don Juan*, by the Spanish dramatist, Torilla. They decided to make their next bid for London favour with a dramatic version of this work. The writer chosen for the task of making a suitable version was the late Mr Herman Merivale, but when the work approached completion the young actor manager and his dramatist got at loggerheads, in one of those complicated situations which puzzle everyone who tries to disentangle them. Martin Harvey was not satisfied with the play, and wanted it altered. Merivale apparently jumped to the conclusion that the actor desired to avoid production. It is a good few years now since this quarrel, which had to be carried to the law courts, occupied the attention of the theatrical world. Into the merits of the dispute we need not go to-day. However, both actor and dramatist grew very angry and laboured under a sense of injustice, aggravated in Mr Harvey's case by the untimely circulation of a "squib" by Merivale, which only added fuel to the fire. Discussing the question with Martin Harvey, long after the fires had died down, I remember his very brief comment: "I think, in my difficulty, I should have gone to Irving and explained the situation, but he was away at the time. If I had, he would have said: 'Pay, my boy—pay,' and I should have taken his advice."

This was not a propitious beginning. A second version of the story was prepared by Mrs Cunninghame Graham, but when the play was produced it ended in disaster. The critics were unanimous in condemnation. There was nothing for it but to withdraw *Don Juan's Last Wager*, a serious blow to Martin Harvey financially, and, what was more important still, a check upon his immediate intentions, made all the more drastic because the disaster with its wearing strain began to tell upon his constitution.

Mr Harvey insisted on believing the tide would turn, with all the artist's optimistic faith in his own creation. Whether the situation could have been saved or not, one can hardly tell, to-day. Audiences were responding to the young manager's persistent effort to stem the tide, but Fate intervened with a still more telling blow. A chill, contracted at a moment when Mr Harvey's resisting powers were at their lowest, put him out of action altogether. Mrs Harvey, always the woman of the household before she is the actress of the theatre, acted in her characteristic manner. She decided to end the wearing strain at once, and herself wrote out and put up the notices which ended the career of *Don Juan*.

A brief holiday followed at Ventnor, a welcome release from the storm and stress. But the Prince of Wales Theatre was still in the occupation of Martin Harvey, and it had to be filled. After a few weeks of rest and recuperation, Martin Harvey returned to resume the battle against adversity. Seriously crippled financially, he could not play a strong card. As a stop-gap a triple bill was decided upon. *Rouget de l'Isle*, *Ib and Little Christina* and *A Pantomime Rehearsal* were hastily produced, and met with a great deal of approval in the press. Everyone agreed that the triple bill was delightful, particularly for the season of the year, but while it served to check the rout the three plays formed too slight a programme to fill a big West End theatre, or to provide the revenue necessary if it were to be kept open. The company played on bravely. Mr

Harvey speaks with affectionate regard of the players associated with him — amongst them Brandon Thomas, Weedon Grossmith, Miss Eva Moore and Miss Mary Rorke—who in loyalty to the struggling management made great sacrifices of salary to help to keep the theatre open. Their devotion was unavailing. The weather outside and the waning season were against them. Then public support began to drop away, and the liabilities of the new management piled themselves up by leaps and bounds. Came a day when the charges for the rent of the Prince of Wales were due, without the necessary balance at the bank to meet them. The meteor-like career of the actor manager received its first uncompromising check. "I could not pay the rent," Mr Harvey explained tersely, as we went over those stern days, "and I had to get out." Even to this day, the recollection has not faded from the actor manager's mind. One can see its trace in the grim comment he added after a slight pause: "The thing was so, and there was nothing else to do. It was business, and I had to get out." After a brief spell of success, which would have turned many a man's head, the actor manager was a manager only on his past record, without a programme for the future or a theatre in which to pursue his art.

II

I have hesitated to tell this side of an actor manager's life. I felt that the domestic aspect of a situation, long since relieved and righted, had but little interest for the public. Long after our first talks over this period of Martin Harvey's life, I let the subject remain in abeyance, thinking it over in my own mind and debating whether to put in the dark picture of failure, side by side with the high lights of success. Finally, almost on the eve of the completion of the book—for this chapter had been left incomplete—I stated the difficulty to the man most intimately concerned with the matter. Our second talk took place at the moment when Martin Harvey had arrested London with his superb *Œdipus Rex* in Professor Reinhardt's production at Covent Garden. Something like the *furore* achieved by *The Only Way* had been repeated, by an actor who had again surprised his public. I raised the question of recording these months of failure at the moment when the actor's right to an assured place amongst English tragedians had been generously allowed by critics and students of the art of the theatre, amid a remarkable chorus of praise.

" Why should you not tell the story as it was ? " Martin Harvey asked. " It was all painfully true." And again, later, he added : " The chapter might interest many people. Although so many theatregoers think your popular manager's life is a primrose path, along which he travels feted and caressed, there are many, with insight, who know he has sterner problems than securing the applause of crowds. Yes—and tell them, too, that in those very bitter days, when I had lost heart and was weak and ill; when my very initiative seemed to have broken down—the devotion of my wife and her unfailing cheerfulness and confidence in our future nerved me to face the task of going on."

So Martin Harvey went on. At that time he removed from Baker Street to his present charming home in Avenue Road. He will tell you grimly how a hoo-doo seemed to have been over his career from the time of his residence in the Baker Street district. At this moment Mr Harvey had to go to and from the city seeking support from financiers for the further enterprise he had in his mind—a weary business—and, on the very last day, the Baker Street run of ill luck asserted itself to the end.

"Everything had been packed for the carriers," Martin Harvey said, "and some of our possessions had already gone on. My wife and I, late in the evening, were taking a final look round, before going to our temporary quarters for the night. I remember we turned to go, and stood outside our rooms after pulling the door to. Then it suddenly occurred to me I might as well look over the letter-box, in case anything had come by the last postal delivery. There was one letter addressed to me. I had been to see a man on whom I had built great hopes, and who had encouraged me to believe he would finance an enterprise I was planning. His answer was 'No,' a 'No' that sent my hopes to zero. That was the end of Baker Street. Am I superstitious? I don't know. There seem to be places with which one associates a malign influence. I know our disasters all came about in Baker Street. I also know that, at the very moment I left the place for good, the last post delivered during my tenancy dealt me a smashing blow. The atmosphere of gloom lightened almost as soon as we got to Avenue Road, and we began a new and brighter chapter of our lives there. The tide turned almost immediately—slowly at first—but from the moment of the change it did turn, and our difficulties began to disappear. I was not out of the wood by any means. The burden grew lighter and the prospects brighter, and after years of hard work there came a day when I could say that I had met all the heavy liabilities which my spell of disastrous management incurred."

III

On those days when, at the end of his own resources, Martin Harvey had to go to the city in the hope of securing a syndicate to finance his future operations, he likes to dwell. He loves to talk of his very brief familiarity with the highways and byways of finance. The men in it represented a world he had not plumbed, and their ways struck him as entertaining and peculiar. Armed with letters of introduction, he met every grade of financier, from the duke who dabbled in the city, and the great South African magnate, to the man who turned out in after life to be running all sorts of dubious enterprises. He liked many of the men he met. As a whole he describes the better type of financiers—the money lords—as keen to dabble in theatrical speculation, hail-fellow-well-met in business, passing their word for hundreds, or even thousands, of pounds by a nod of their head, in the most casual manner, but keen on meeting their obligations, and seeing others do the same, in the same careless, happy-go-lucky fashion. They were also good losers, attentive to the business in hand, and made more than a pretence towards understanding the business problems of the theatre. On the whole, however, Martin Harvey does not like the system of calling in the aid of the financier, he was loth to go into it, and glad when the time came when, as an actor manager, he could again paddle his own canoe.

With the aid of a few city men, to whom the young actor manager communicated his enthusiasm for his art, a very few months elapsed before Martin Harvey renewed his experiences of managerial work. He took the Court Theatre, the scene of his first appearance, and produced there *A Cigarette Maker's Romance.* Of this Clement Scott said: "He has made him [Count Skariatine] one of the most lovable figures on the modern stage." Indeed, *A Cigarette Maker's Romance* turned the evil tide. In it Martin Harvey found another actor's play. All the critics were not pleased with it, but the story, as unfolded in the play, represents to-day, after many years of wear, one of the best things Martin Harvey has done. It is a source of boundless fascination to audiences, and deservedly so. The picturesque old-world costumes, the gentle dandyism of the exiled nobleman who has lost his memory, his graceful condescension which never becomes patronage, his relationship with the workers about him, and his sprightly optimism, give Martin Harvey's personality a range of effects which fit him like a glove. Add to this, the fact that in Viera one also gets Miss de Silva at her best, in a part which alternates between delightful comedy and a gentle devoted pathos, and the success of *A Cigarette Maker's Romance* was practically assured. After a run at the Court Theatre, the play was transferred to the Apollo, where it had another run in the heart of the West End, the season closing with a revival of *The Only Way*, now beginning to show its very real vitality.

The fact remains, though the seasons at the Court and the Apollo gave the young manager added prestige, financially they did not help his resources. To attempt another London season with a *coup* was out of the question on the results of *A Cigarette Maker's Romance*. When the season was at an end, Martin Harvey had to face the problem—whether he should go on as a manager, or accept engagements as an actor under other managements. Circumstances were pulling the latter way; instinct bade him keep along the way he had chosen. How he should follow his season up with a renewal of managerial responsibilities represented a very real difficulty.

The problem was solved in a very casual manner by a walk down the Strand. Passing along the highway of all the world, Mr Harvey met an old friend of great theatrical experience. In their talk, as they walked, the young actor manager admitted his difficulties. He did not know which way to turn.

" Why not take *The Only Way* to the provinces again ? " suggested the friend.

" Yes," replied the manager ruefully ; " but the first tour, though a delightful experience, was financially not sufficiently encouraging to bid me repeat the experiment to diminishing receipts."

" Take my advice and do it again," the actor manager's companion suggested. " Though you did not reap a great deal of profit from the first tour, *The Only Way* made a deep impression. The interest in a second visit would be double. I have been over the same ground, and I know from experience the interest the play excited. The people are simply waiting to see it again."

Out of that conversation, Martin Harvey carried the intention of again going to the provinces. He took with him *The Only Way* and *A Cigarette Maker's Romance.* The tour was a revelation. Great as had been the public interest in *The Only Way* during the first tour, there was no comparison between it and the wonderful enthusiasm which was shown during the second representation in the big provincial centres. The tour was in every way a triumph, and *A Cigarette Maker's Romance* was accepted with almost the same unanimity. That provincial tour, a forlorn hope, was the solid platform on which

Martin Harvey has since built an extensive repertoire. It consolidated his position in the ranks of actor managers. With two strong plays, which the public adopted with warm-hearted devotion, the reverses of the past were wiped out and all the worries were eliminated. The success of the tour paved the way for a renewal of managerial enterprises on a much broader scale, too. In quick succession, and following this tour, were produced an interesting dramatisation of Bulwer Lytton's " Eugene Aram " (*After All*), which had a long run and was given for a season in town, and *The Children of the King*, a version of a German legend which was never quite accepted by Martin Harvey's now extended following. As a matter of fact, the trouble for the moment, which Mrs Harvey outlined in a previous chapter, began to assert itself. The public had wholeheartedly taken up *The Only Way*, and for a number of seasons refused to accept Mr Harvey in anything else, saving perhaps *A Cigarette Maker's Romance*. His patrons were in danger of making of him an actor manager with one or two plays, just as managers had threatened, at one moment of his career, to stereotype him into playing one line of parts.

It was during this season that " Martin Harvey, Miss de Silva and Company " played *A Cigarette Maker's Romance* to a great house party assembled at Eaton Hall, the seat of the Duke of Westminster, on a bijou stage, with scenery made to scale. Within a few weeks the company also performed at Sandringham, presenting the same play before the late King, with the properties used before the Duke of Westminster, which he kindly lent. Following this came an American tour, during which Martin Harvey was struck down with pneumonia, a painful and dangerous illness, followed by a tedious process of convalescence. On his return to England, he found a public more eager than ever to welcome him back, and passed on to the more recent years of his career—years of progressive artistic development that have placed him securely before the public as one of the leading English tragedians.

CHAPTER XIX

AFTER AMERICA—"THE EXILE"—GROWING POPULARITY IN THE NORTH—"THE BREED OF THE TRESHAMS"—CRITICS AND THEIR SEATS—THE BEGINNING OF THE "HAMLET" PERIOD—A PRODUCTION AT DUBLIN—AN ERROR IN TACTICS—TOO MANY "HAMLETS"—IRVING AND MARTIN HARVEY'S "HAMLET"—AN INITIAL FAILURE AND A SUBSEQUENT SUCCESS—THE DEVELOPMENT OF "HAMLET"—MISS DE SILVA'S OPHELIA—SIR H. IRVING'S MESSAGE

I

WITH the end of the American tour, and Martin Harvey's return to England, one outstanding fact became very obvious: the experimental days of management were over. The cordial reception of the actor manager, a characteristic of his first tours of the big provincial cities, turned to an enthusiasm which is shown for few actors nowadays, either in town or country. The warm-hearted playgoers in the Midland cities, in Leeds, Manchester and Liverpool, on the Tyneside, in Glasgow and Edinburgh, and in Dublin and Belfast began to take an increasing interest in Martin Harvey's successive visits to their theatres. No actor has ever made a deeper impression on the playgoers of these cities, and no player was ever more proud of the devotion of his "following" than Martin Harvey—unless it is his artistic partner, Miss N. de Silva.

With such a following, Martin Harvey's activity as a manager rapidly broadened, and there began a period of preparation in the direction of realising a long-cherished dream. About this time, we begin to approach the *Hamlet* period. This is not to say, however, that the actor manager was idle. Indeed, he was very busy. In 1903, at the Royalty, he produced a Napoleon play—*The Exile*, by Lloyd Osborne and Austin Strong—very little interval elapsing between his arrival home and the first night. This play was put on for a very limited season, and met with the fate which has usually marked attempts to bring the fascinating personality of Napoleon upon the stage. The general opinion was—a weak play full of very interesting acting. It served, however, to show Martin Harvey that London had grown keener to see him than ever, after his long absence. At the end of the short season at the Royalty, Mr Harvey renewed his earlier associations with Mrs Patrick Campbell, at the New Theatre. Mrs Patrick Campbell had decided to produce *The Joy of Living*, an English version of Suderman's *Es Liebe das Leben*, translated by Miss Edith Wharton. In this production, Mr Harvey gave a delightful rendering of one of the principal parts—Baron Richard von Volkerlink.

The first provincial tour, after the American visit, began on 17th August 1903, amid scenes of remarkable enthusiasm, which increased as the tour progressed, and with very little interval was continued to the end of the spring of 1904. On this tour Mr Harvey had decided to play *The Exile, Ib and Little Christina, A Cigarette Maker's Romance* and *The Only Way*. The fare provided was greatly to the taste of the big audiences which gathered in all the theatres in Mr Harvey's itinerary. By the end of the tour Martin Harvey had made important additions to his repertoire. At Newcastle, on 28th September 1903, he produced *The Breed of the Treshams*, a romantic play by John Rutherford. The play, dealing with the romantic seventeenth century, and full of stirring incident, had a tremendous reception, and immediately threatened to rival *The Only Way* in popularity. This play is so familiar to admirers of the actor's work that it does not demand any elaborate treatment here. As a dashing cavalier, with picturesque vices and virtues, Mr Harvey, as Reresby ("The Rat"), a soldier of fortune, found an actor's part which fitted him like a glove. In the same play, Miss de Silva, as the boy, "Batty," a strong and picturesque character part, also found a new place in the affections of a constantly widening public. *The Breed of the Treshams* was received with a chorus of praise wherever it was presented, a verdict which was endorsed during its production in London.

In passing, mention of the London season of 1903 should include some reference to the great battle waged over the question whether a dramatic critic should pay for his first-night seat or not. At the time, the din of this battle resounded, with great fury, throughout the columns of the press, though nowadays one is inclined to think there was an unnecessary roar of combat over such a simple issue. These absorbing incidents will shrivel in interest with the passage of time. The heads of the affair only need be given here, as a matter of interest to students of theatrical history.

At the time of the production of *The Exile*, Mr A. B. Walkley, the critic of *The Times*, had attracted considerable attention by his vigorous and trenchant handling of several well-known actors. This, I believe, led to the Garrick Theatre omitting to invite Mr Walkley to the first night of *Whitewashing Julia*. *The Times* then decided the independence of its critic should not be challenged in this manner, and made a rule that all the seats occupied by him, in his professional capacity, should be paid for at the box office, in the usual way. When *The Exile* came along, Mr Frank O'Neill, Mr Harvey's business manager, sent out the customary invitations to the first-night performance, including seats for *The Times* critic. The vouchers were acknowledged by *The Times*, the management of which enclosed a cheque for a guinea with Mr Walkley's compliments. Mr O'Neill, after consulting with Mr Harvey, returned the cheque, insisting that the invitation to a first night was a courtesy, for which payment could not be accepted. It was further suggested that, if Mr Walkley could not accept the seats under these conditions, he might return them.

The correspondence drew a spirited rejoinder from the late Mr C. F. Moberly Bell, the manager of *The Times*, and a circular, stating the reasons for the rule made in Printing House Square that *The Times* critic should always pay for his seat. The end of the matter was Mr Walkley left the first night of *The Exile* severely alone, and no notice of any kind appeared in the columns of *The Thunderer*. The amusing side of the whole incident was the extent and variety of the press references to this incident. Literally, columns were written about it. Some seemed to think the honours of this difference of opinion were with Martin Harvey; others thought Mr Moberly Bell had the odd trick; most people wondered what it was all about, and were not quite sure who had won. All the same, the incident was an absorbing topic of that day. Myself, looking back, I am inclined to think honours were easy, with the advantage lying in Mr Frank O'Neill's favour. Certainly, as a business manager, he had secured a prolonged and widely read advertisement out of the discussion which at least kept his principal's operations well in the public eye.

II

Martin Harvey did not attempt a London season in 1904. He was content to make holiday, in the brief interval between the end of the spring tour and the beginning of the next round of provincial visits.

Martin Harvey's Home: an Interior

Photograph by Russell & Son

The 1904 tour began with increased enthusiasm, and the exceptional popularity of the new management made the way clear for the pursuit of Mr Harvey's higher ambitions. Keen on the practice of his art, Martin Harvey was not content to rest on the laurels won as a romantic actor, and the 1904 tour became a landmark in his career, for that he was able to realise a long-cherished dream of presenting his reading of *Hamlet.* For some time, this had been the goal of his ambitions, and with the barometer persistently set fair the project became more feasible. Dublin, where Martin Harvey has a wonderful following, was chosen for the trial performance, and *Hamlet* was staged there during a three weeks' visit, on 21st November 1904. The first night was a notable event in the theatrical history of Dublin, and the actor manager had one of the most enthusiastic and representative audiences ever drawn together in the Theatre Royal to study his conception of the character of the much-debated Prince of Denmark. All the most representative figures in Irish society were assembled there, and the theatre was packed in the more popular parts by the many playgoing friends made by Martin Harvey during his previous visits.

The reception of *Hamlet* in Dublin was very cordial, the critics agreeing, with reservations, on the interest of the production. *Hamlet*, as offered by Martin Harvey, pleased both the critics and the Dublin playgoers, while for the first time one notes the discriminating praise which singled out Miss de

Silva's Ophelia and her simple treatment of the "mad" scenes. The three weeks' stay in Dublin was a charming period in the history of Martin Harvey, which the actor likes to recall. It ended with a public luncheon, arranged by the Corinthian Society at Dublin, the guests of the day being Mr and Mrs Martin Harvey and the late Mr Edward Terry, who was on a professional visit to the Irish city. After the production of *Hamlet* the provincial tour was resumed, the repertoire including old favourites, and *The Breed of the Treshams*, which served to fill the theatres until the end of the itinerary in the spring.

Martin Harvey had decided, after the Dublin production of *Hamlet*, to bring the tragedy to London. He desired to challenge the attention of theatregoers in the hub of the universe as a tragedian. From the moment his decision was made, things went against his cherished dream, and most of the influences at work were out of the actor's control. Indeed, Martin Harvey's announcement of his intention to present his *Hamlet* at the Lyric, on 22nd May 1905, was followed by one of the most grotesque situations which has ever arisen in theatrical London. All the world of leading actors seemed to have decided to play *Hamlet* in London simultaneously. The announcement of Martin Harvey's intentions came at a time when Mr H. B. Irving had decided to give *Hamlet* during his season at the Adelphi. Sir H. Tree also announced his intention of reviving the play, while other Hamlets in the field were Mr Forbes Robertson and Mr Benson. So many Hamlets threatened to take the stage that the very title became a jest. The air was thick with rumours of the intentions of other would-be Hamlets; the papers, struck by the novelty of the situation, were full of humorous references to the play and to the plethora of princely Danes; the novel situation became the jest of every music-hall comedian and the subject of several foolish burlesques.

Martin Harvey made a grave error of tactics. Early in the field with his announcement, he felt that he ought not to break faith with the public. Mr Harvey decided to go on, despite the gathering cloud of *Hamlets*, which threatened to burst upon the stage. The result of the announcements of so many *Hamlets* was to destroy the receptive state of mind of both playgoers and critics. There was "too much *Hamlet*" in the air, and the play, which demands a serious preparation from the player, and earnest and respectful attention from the playgoer, became a byword and a subject for the wit of the town. With so many players bent on attempting the greatest of all plays, the necessary atmosphere of sympathetic attention was completely destroyed for all the players, though not all who announced their intention to produce the tragedy went on with the enterprise. However, when the *Hamlets* did begin to take actual shape on the stage, the state of mind of the public became obvious, and enhanced the difficulties in the way of presenting what is always a *tour de force* for the actors concerned. Wiser counsel would have bade Mr Harvey to withdraw from the experiment, but the artist could not lightly sacrifice a dream cherished by him for years. In truth, not until the company was on the verge of production did the actor manager realise the absurd—the grotesque—side of the situation, and then it was too late. To attempt to present *Hamlet* under the conditions existing in 1905 was to court failure, and failure followed. In a manly speech, at the end of the short run, Mr Harvey took the burden of failure on his own shoulders, and publicly announced that the production had been an unpardonable blunder.

III

Before passing to an estimate of what *Hamlet* has meant to Martin Harvey's career—because, despite the unfavourable beginning, his work in the great tragedy has been one of his most artistic successes—I ought to include some references bearing on the production by the actor himself.

" Irving heard I was going to do *Hamlet*," Martin Harvey said, the day we began to survey this period. " I was on tour at the time, and happened to be playing in Birmingham while Irving was there. He met my wife in the street and stopped her. 'I hear your husband is going to do *Hamlet*,' he said, in the well-known manner. 'Capital — capital. Ask him to come and see me and have a chat about it.' Of course I was delighted and set off for Irving's hotel. To the end, Irving was the great chief of the Lyceum, and I was never able to approach him except with a consciousness of a relationship which involved a sense of our respective positions in his theatre that never left me.

" I remember I visited the hotel just after the nap he used to take in the afternoon. Walter, his faithful dresser, was preparing the coffee Irving took before going to the theatre. Irving was most kind about the enterprise, and discussed it, as he sat in his arm-chair, very freely. He sent me two volumes bearing on the subject, and gave me much useful advice. I remember one of the characteristic things he said, when I admitted my intention to essay the task, was : ' Well, you know, my boy, it is just as well to play it when you are young. You must not leave it until you are too old ! ' He meant, of course, that the exacting nature of the part made it an impossible strain on the resources of a player past his prime. He also told me what he had said to another player, who had come to Irving with the same ambitious story : ' You are going to play Hamlet—eh ? ' Irving asked. ' Ah, well, you'll be a miserable fellow for the rest of your life.' Again, Irving knew what he was talking about. He meant that, however convincing the ambitious actor may be so far as the presentation of *Hamlet* is concerned in his relations with the public, he will never satisfy himself or realise his own conception of the character. There is one last story of Irving and *Hamlet.*

Another actor announced to Irving his intention of essaying the great rôle. ‘Why, my boy, you have left it a bit late, haven’t you—eh? How do you know you won’t do yourself a grievous physical injury?’ was Irving’s comment, again, under its sly humour, expressing his intense appreciation of the mere physical stress of giving a capable reading of *Hamlet.*

“When I came to play Hamlet, I found out what Sir Henry meant. Until I grew accustomed to the frequent representations of the part I used to feel, after the play, as if I had been ill for a long time, and had got up for the first time, to realise my own physical exhaustion. In *The Breed of the Treshams* I have a trying part, but in that the tension is purely physical. In *Hamlet* the strain is complicated by the demands made upon the intelligence—one’s mental vitality—as well as upon the physical make-up. I always think the long tour with *The Breed of the Treshams* was a great preparation for *Hamlet*—it had accustomed me to bear a part nightly which made great demands upon my physical strength. I remember one of the last things Irving said to me was: ‘If you do not feel you are ready, don’t let them bustle you into doing it.’ Oh yes! Irving knew something of the physical side of acting. In his later years, he never attempted Hamlet. I once asked Loveday why Irving gave up his greatest part. Loveday’s reply was: ‘I think Irving felt himself burnt out. He had put so much thought and concentration into the part through so many years, he felt he had no more to give to it.’ ”

On the initial failure of *Hamlet*, Mr Harvey is very frank. “ I had gathered a great deal of confidence from the performances we gave at Dublin, but when the time for our production came round the conditions were against success. The preparations went smoothly, and to avoid first-night nervousness I gave a dress rehearsal, the theatre being filled by members of my profession and friends. I remember, a well-known journalist said, after the rehearsal, that he considered I was going to make the success of my life, judging by the performance at the dress rehearsal. Two or three days later he came back, after the disastrous production. ‘ I saw your *Hamlet* the next night ’—its first performance—‘ and I could not believe it was by the same man.’

“ Well, the reason is simple enough. The night came round and I was confronted with a theatre only half full—stalls, circle, pit and gallery. Invitations had been sent out, but a great many critics did not occupy their seats, which remained empty. *Hamlet* had been overdone, and no one seemed to have any interest in the play. The truth is, I lost my head when I saw that house only half full. My art passed out of my control. I was appalled by the atmosphere of boredom, and instead of being in the frame of mind necessary to produce *Hamlet*, with the amount of sympathy and concentration it demands, I felt my personality tainted by irritability. I grew hard and defiant as the time for the performance drew nearer, and the state of my mind when the curtain went up is best expressed by the popular phrase : ‘ I did not care a damn.’ The consequence is, I made a mess of it.

“ Well, I withdrew *Hamlet.* It was a bitter experience, but one that did me a great deal of good. The failure taught me a lesson I shall never forget—disaster often does good. I have never forgotten the lessons of that night, and I know every step of the way I trod to that disaster.”

IV

The result of that night is stamped on the *Hamlet* Mr Harvey gives to great audiences to-day. Mrs Harvey’s verdict after the failure was, “ Go on with it,” and since that day Martin Harvey has gone on with his *Hamlet,* working upon it almost every day of his life. Withdrawn from the Lyric, the tragedy went into the repertoire on tour. It is characteristic of Mr Harvey’s attitude to his art that he has pursued his dream of playing *Hamlet* with greater courage and devotion as a long and endless task than he did when the production was considered more as a splendid dash for artistic achievement. Out of this devotion a great reading of the character has emerged. *Hamlet* is the play on which he lavishes all the force of his artistic temperament. His realisation of the great rôle is constantly improving, and as one subtlety after another has been added the result has grown more and more impressive. At the initial performance, the critics found many wonderful moments in the play, but to-day it is full of wonderful moments. The student of the theatre who judges Martin Harvey's *Hamlet* on its first reception should see the tragedy to-day. Although there must always be differences of opinion over any one reading of the part, Martin Harvey's conception is now treated everywhere with profound respect. Indeed, it is perhaps the most finished reading before the public, and the most studiously free from conventional theatricalism.

Martin Harvey's *Hamlet* to-day is entirely different—in conception, treatment and presentation. A stern simplicity is the keynote both of the staging and the acting. Gone are all the elaborate efforts after a realism which aimed at producing the Denmark of Hamlet's day. The scenic intention to-day is along the modern lines of simplicity and suggestion. Interiors and exteriors are merely indicated by cloths, colours and lights. The whole aim is to create the necessary atmosphere without tiresome and obvious elaboration of the scenery intruding to distract the attention of the audience. The mounting of *Hamlet*, by Martin Harvey, achieves the end in view.

There is no necessity to emphasise the delight of this *Hamlet* unduly. The play is there for everyone to see, and after all the play is the thing. As the tragedy is in the repertoire wherever Mr Harvey goes, his Hamlet is the most accessible of the actor's achievements. The only criticism I need pass is that the reading is now singularly lucid—it illuminates almost every line of the text. Where the play is most obscure, Martin Harvey's interpretation of the lines commands the respect of the Shakespearean student, even it if does not carry conviction in every case. Always, Mr Harvey's reading is an intelligent alternative, frequently original, nearly always tenable and oftener than not forceful and convincing.

As Hamlet, Martin Harvey satisfies the eye. The actor has as many moods as a violin has tones, and they lend themselves readily to bodying forth the complex personality of Shakespeare's dreams. The beauty of his elocution, subdued and never used with any other reason than to enhance the text by revealing its many meanings, is part of the lasting impression one carries away. Martin Harvey's Hamlet is an artist first, profoundly critical, and increasingly so when introspective. He is a gentleman after, sweet and lovable in many passages, and his breeding remains, the nearer he approaches to the mental chaos which indicates the unstable mind. Martin Harvey reveals Hamlet as a man of action and a dreamer dwelling upon the word, and reconciles the contradiction. In the scenes with Ophelia, when Hamlet's conduct sometimes becomes inexplicable, his wild words logically indicate a tenable psychological condition. In addition, the part is enriched by the vivid, many-sided personality of an actor who unites inspiration with a minute study of the resources of his craft. All this is perhaps praise indeed, but there is the Hamlet to see. Probably no *Hamlet* has drawn more and bigger audiences in our time, with the possible exception of Sir Henry Irving's. The truth of my estimate can be tested by a reference to the actor's work.

One last comment on the production. Miss de Silva's Ophelia is a notable feature of this *Hamlet.* Her conception of the distraught heroine of Shakespeare's tragedy gives us an Ophelia fragrant in her simplicity, and as devoid of the tricks of the theatre as a flower. Ophelia lives close to the glowing line of the text: " Thought and affliction, passion, hell itself, she turns to favour and prettiness "—when rendered by Mrs Harvey.

One other note. On the evening of the production, Sir Henry Irving telegraphed to the young actor who was to essay his great rôle. The words of the message were: " The readiness is all."

CHAPTER XX

AFTER "HAMLET"—"BOY O'CARROLL"—A SUCCESSFUL LONDON SEASON — "THE CORSICAN BROTHERS"—HELPING THE ONE-ACT PLAY—THE ACTOR'S PUBLIC APPEARANCES—AT SANDRINGHAM—ROYAL COMMANDS—KING EDWARD AND "THE CORSICAN BROTHERS" — MARTIN HARVEY AND THE "BROTHER PRO"—KURKAMP'S REMINISCENCES OF LOVEDAY — THE LATE FRED WRIGHT—A STORY OF A FINE OLD ACTOR

I

MARTIN HARVEY'S career, since its production of *Hamlet*, will be familiar to the huge public of theatre-goers, particularly to the actor's many admirers who make a point of going to see him in everything he does. The routine of his life from the *Hamlet* period need not be outlined at any length here, for most of the productions will be fresh in the mind of the public.

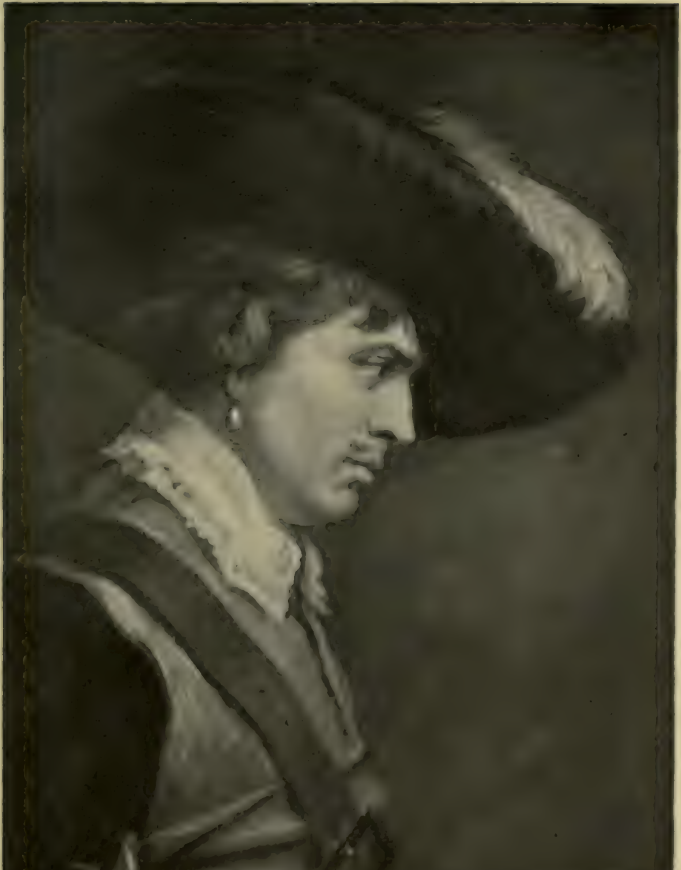
"Martin Harvey and Company, including Miss N. de Silva," are a deeply rooted organisation to-day, and the secret of the actor manager's constant success is the ever-present tendency of his repertoire to lengthen. It is still possible to meet some superficial critic who regards Martin Harvey as the player of one part—as a man whose reputation is based on his appearance as Sidney Carton. The sober truth is that scarcely a season goes by without one or more productions by Martin Harvey, and at the rate of his present progress the actor manager will soon have as long a repertoire as any actor on the stage. In the provinces and in London, the company is constantly in harness, and rarely does one find it, either in London or the provinces, without a new play in active preparation and rehearsal.

Take the years following *Hamlet*, as examples. *Hamlet* went into the repertoire and has been presented regularly ever since. The autumn tour of 1905 included the regular presentation of *After All*, renamed *Eugene Aram*, *A Cigarette Maker's Romance*, *Hamlet* and *The Only Way*. In April 1906, *Boy O'Carroll*, a picturesque play of the Cavalier period, which gives Mr Harvey the part of a dashing devil-may-care Irish soldier of fortune, and Mrs Harvey one of those character studies in which she delights, as Paudheen, was added. The work of B. M. Dix and E. G. Sutherland, the play was first produced at Newcastle, in April 1906. Since then, Mr Harvey's Irish D'Artagnan has delighted audiences throughout the country. *Boy O'Carroll*, after a tour of the provinces, was presented for a season in London, at the ill-fated but handsome Imperial Theatre built by Mrs Langtry.

After the London season, another autumn tour was immediately begun, and in the October of 1906 Mr Harvey revived *The Corsican Brothers*, which held a place in the repertoire for several seasons, and is still occasionally played. A new one-act play, *The*

Spell, by Rosamund Langbridge, was produced at Manchester in the November of the same year. As an interesting sidelight on the extent to which Martin Harvey's repertoire had grown, a glance at the programme submitted during a three weeks' stay in Dublin is significant. During one week *The Corsican Brothers* was given; *The Breed of the Treshams* and *Hamlet* were presented during the second week; during the third week there was a triple bill—*Rouget de l'Isle, Ib and Little Christina*, and *The Spell*—which shared the honours with *The Only Way* and *A Cigarette Maker's Romance.*

In the summer of 1906, the season at the Adelphi in the Strand began with *The Breed of the Treshams.* An entirely new play, translated from the German of Karl Rossler, was presented—*Great Possessions* was a biblical subject founded on the problems confronting the wealthy young man who set out to sell all he had and give to the poor. During the same season, *The Corsican Brothers* was given in London and exercised a remarkable hold on audiences. *The Only Way* also had to be revived in the same season. The autumn tour of 1907 began at Buxton, and the next important production was Stephen Phillips' dramatic version of Sir Walter Scott's great story, *The Bride of Lammermoor*, with Martin Harvey as Ravenswood. This proved a very successful addition to the repertoire, the play finally being named *The Last Heir.* The production of this play took place at Glasgow, in the March of 1908. The provinces occupied Martin Harvey and his com-



Reresby ("The Rat")

("The Breed of the Treshams")

From a Portrait by Charles Beatson

pany almost until the opening of the London season, which began at the Adelphi, on 5th September 1908, and did not end until 5th December.

This London season was interesting because it marked Martin Harvey's definite hold on large audiences and the consolidation of what is now known as the Martin Harvey following. The season also displayed to London the resources of the new management, just settling down, in its hard-won prestige, to a round of ever-widening activities. *The Corsican Brothers*, showing singular vitality, proved successful during the opening weeks, and the play was marked by an effort on the part of Martin Harvey and Miss de Silva to give new life to the one-act play. In front of *The Corsican Brothers*, a new one-act play was put, each week, two of which were original productions. The four plays used were *Conspiracy*, by Robert Barr and S. L. Ransom; *The House of Pierre*, by Julia Opp Faversham and Kate Jordan; *Ib and Little Christina*, by Capt. Basil Hood, and *The Tragedy of Truth*, by Rosamund Langbridge. Stephen Phillips' play, now known as *The Last Heir*, played five weeks to exceptional audiences, and *The Breed of the Treshams*, *The Only Way* and *A Cigarette Maker's Romance* brought the season to a close. Almost immediately the company were on the road again, and the last production was *Slander*, afterwards called *The World and his Wife*, by C. F. Nirdlinger, an adaptation of Echegaray's famous *El Gran Galeoto*, from the Spanish, first presented in December 1908, before a Birmingham audience.

II

This then gives a fair idea of what Martin Harvey and his company were doing in the fertile years after the production of *Hamlet*, which ended with 1908. A mere passing reference to the actor manager's activities at once discounts the suggestion that he is a player of one part, or an actor of one style. Much more interesting to the student of the actor manager's rise is the evidence given of the broadening artistic basis of Mr Harvey's conception of management. With three plays, all of which had established a firm hold on public attention, Martin Harvey could have gone on resting on his oars and enjoying an easy prosperity, indefinitely. Instead, began the long and arduous life of devotion to his art which gives us the Martin Harvey of to-day, a student, much of a recluse, and an actor always preoccupied with his ambitions. With a management deeply rooted in popular esteem, he has not been content. He gives increasing effort in return for the loyalty and affection of his public. The life of rehearsal, rehearsal, rehearsal began, and an attempt to perfect old plays and new, so that every production shall be carried to its highest point of artistic presentation. In these years one notes, for instance, how the criticism of *Hamlet* changes, from interest, to a respect for the actor's art, and its artistically successful and dignified employment. One also notes, too, the actor manager's growing sense of responsibility—the development of an attitude of mind which is nothing less than a desire to give more and better effort in return for the unswerving loyalty of the public. The Martin Harvey I outlined in my earlier chapters begins to emerge—the Martin Harvey whose social appearances are rare; whose year is spent in the service of the theatre except for a brief vacation of from two to three weeks; whose instinct is to merge the resources of the artist, the actor, the producer and the manager, and to secure a higher standard of achievement by a single-minded application to the theatre that leaves but little time for other interests.

Again, one sees the actor broadening his interest in the way he responds to the claims made upon his time by the public he serves. His social relaxations cease to be pleasures and become public duties. In 1906, Martin Harvey lectured before the students assembled in the Trinity College Examination Hall, during his three weeks' stay in Dublin, the subject being "Some Reflections on the Art of Acting." This appearance outside the beaten paths of his art was the first of many. The lecture has been repeated in many centres. Amongst public appearances made by the actor must be emphasised the work he has done in lecturing on behalf of the Shakespeare Memorial National Theatre in all the important provincial centres; speeches made to various clubs aiming at the fostering of the arts, and assistance, never withheld, by patronage, presence, speech, professional appearance or subscription afforded to most of the organisations concerned with the art of the actor, his social status and his professional development. In these directions Martin Harvey gives freely of his time, but apart from such public appearances he is seen but little socially. During most of the year his life is spent in and about the theatre, and his mind is almost entirely concentrated on the work of the stage.

III

Of many instances of public recognition bestowed on his art, Martin Harvey speaks with appreciation, and he is specially proud of the royal interest displayed from time to time, by visits to the theatre and command performances. As an old member of the Lyceum Theatre Company, Martin Harvey gained very early acquaintance with the atmosphere of command performances. His first experience was at Sandringham, when Sir Henry Irving gave *The Bells* and the Trial Scene from *The Merchant of Venice* before the late Queen Victoria and King Edward, then, of course, Prince of Wales. On this first visit to Sandringham, Martin Harvey did not appear, but fulfilled a useful purpose. The stage was somewhat cramped for Sir Henry Irving's scenic arrangements, and one of the effects was only obtained with difficulty—the light which illuminated the background in the vision showing the forge. This back-cloth was against the wall of the available space given to the staging of the play, and Martin Harvey, as the thinnest man in the Lyceum company, was taken down to hold the lighted candle which, seen from the front, suggested the furnace. A second royal command took Mr Harvey to Windsor, when *Becket* was given by Sir Henry Irving before the late Queen Victoria.

Martin Harvey's first direct royal command took place on 11th January 1902, when *A Cigarette Maker's Romance* was given, in the ballroom at Sandringham, before King Edward and Queen Alexandra, amongst the distinguished audience being the Prince and Princess of Wales and Prince and Princess Charles of Denmark. *A Cigarette Maker's Romance* was given with the properties designed for an earlier performance at Eaton Hall, lent by the Duke of Westminster. Mr and Mrs Harvey left St Pancras at noon, and were driven to Sandringham from Wolferton. A rehearsal was held in the afternoon, and the play began at ten o'clock, the last act being over shortly after twelve. The company reached London in the early hours of Sunday morning.

"Our first visit to Sandringham is a very delightful recollection," Martin Harvey said. "After the performance, my wife and I were presented to the King and Queen, and his Majesty was very cordial in his appreciation of our efforts. King Edward described *A Cigarette Maker's Romance* as very beautiful but very sad. I have a permanent recollection of the visit which takes the form of a diamond pin, presented to me by King Edward after the performance.

"The late King Edward displayed his interest in our enterprises several times," Martin Harvey added. "His Majesty saw *The Only Way* twice, and also visited *Don Juan*. King Edward was very much interested in *The Corsican Brothers*, largely, I believe, because he had seen it done by Irving at the Lyceum. H. J. Loveday used to recall his visits, as the Prince of Wales, to the Lyceum, and his great interest in the mechanical trap which raised the ghost. In June 1907, when *The Only Way* was being given at the Lyceum, King Edward asked for a performance of *The Corsican Brothers*, and the bill was hastily changed to meet his command." On 18th November 1909 the King renewed his interest in Dumas' play. Martin Harvey and Company were commanded to Windsor for that evening, and *The Corsican Brothers* was given in the Waterloo Room, before the court, the occasion being one of the features of the festivities arranged to mark the visit of the King and Queen of Sweden. Some difficulty arose, in this performance, owing to the limited space at the disposal of the stage manager, and many obstacles had to be overcome before the ghost effects could be realised. However, at the performance, everything passed off without a hitch, and in the end the actor manager and his company enjoyed a unique compliment: contrary to the usual practice of the court, King Edward led cordial applause. The company were entertained to supper, and as a memento of the visit the King and Queen presented Mr and Mrs Harvey with a beautiful tortoiseshell casket with the royal monogram worked in diamonds.

IV

Last in this section of Martin Harvey's life may come two or three stories which are slightly against the actor. The first, Martin Harvey tells himself.

During the London season, walking one morning across Hampstead Heath with his young daughter, they stopped to see a performance given by a Punch and Judy show.

"My daughter was vastly entertained, and we stayed through most of the scenes recording Punch's very discreditable progress through life. There was quite a little crowd collected, and I noticed that the man outside the show, a shabby and somewhat quaint person with the subtle signs of character about his make-up which mark the old actor, constantly levied a toll on the crowd. I was rather eager to subscribe, and several times held out my hand, but the collector persistently ignored me. Finally, we decided to walk on, and I went towards the man, holding out a shilling. He simply would not receive the money in his collection. 'No, thanks, Mr Harvey, not from a brother pro.,' he said. 'I've often seen your shows on the nod, up and down the provinces, and it's your turn now. You're on the free list any time you care to visit our little entertainment.' "

Then there is the story the big, blond and genial Kurkamp, Martin Harvey's stage director, loves to tell against "The Chief." In Kurkamp's very serious American manner the story goes with many a sly twist by the way to the somewhat frank *dénouement.*

"When Martin Harvey produced *The Last Heir,*" Kurkamp will tell you, "old Loveday was the stage director, and the Chief thought a good deal of him, and his experience of stage work. After the play had been running two or three nights, Martin Harvey began to itch to improve it. He developed the idea that, because he was not on the stage during most of the third act, the play was seriously weakened. Mr Harvey decided to consult Loveday, and to do this approached him in a diplomatic way with the suggestion of dinner. They had an excellent dinner, and as the two finished off the wine Martin Harvey broached the subject as delicately as possible. Loveday was in an expansive mood. Always a very abstemious man, a glass of wine often turned the genial Loveday, from his almost unvarying tactfulness, to a man who had very frank opinions about many things.

" 'You know, Loveday,' suggested Mr Harvey, 'in the third act I'm hardly on the stage at all.'

"Loveday nodded with an encouraging and appreciative solemnity.

" 'Now, don't you think, as so many people come

John Kurkamp

Stage Director of the Martin Harvey Company

to see me, that they are likely to be disappointed. Don't you think I ought to strengthen up the third act by being on the stage a little more ?'

" Loveday, without a moment's hesitation, and banging his fist on the table with a force that made the cutlery and plate ring again, expressed his opinion.

" ' My dear boy,' said Loveday, in his richly genial manner, ' don't let that worry you. It don't matter a damn whether you are on the stage or not.'

" That," concludes friend Kurkamp, " was the end of the consultation."

This recollection always delights Martin Harvey, and usually prompts him to tell another story of the same play, in which the point is very similar.

" It reminds me of old Fred Wright, who died so recently, and was at his death the oldest actor on the stage," he will tell you. " He was with me during the closing years of his life, and up to a few weeks of his death. He was a very dignified, venerable old man, with beautiful white hair, and a great charm lay in his cheery, optimistic manner. He played Polonius, and was a very delightful Polonius too. I remember one night, when on the stage, he could not make himself heard, through the effects of a cold. As he came off he whispered to me, tapping his chest, ' No resonance, by God! no resonance.' But that is not the story.

" When we produced *The Last Heir* I purposely left old Wright out of the cast, wishing to spare him the burden of a new production. He was very much annoyed; he loved his work and hated to be out of the play. Old as he was, Fred Wright did not like to feel he was being left on the shelf. The play was produced in Glasgow, and old Wright went in front and spent the evening there.

" After the play I met him in the passages behind the theatre. He drew aside to let me pass, looking a little sulky and defiant, when one contrasted his manner with his usual attitude to life.

" 'Well, daddy,' I said, stopping in the passage; 'how did you like the play?'

" He pondered the question deeply.

" 'A little slow, sometimes,' he said at length and with great gravity.

" 'Where is it slow?' I asked.

" Wright eyed me with increasing defiance in his benevolent old eyes.

" 'Do you want to know?' he asked. 'Do you want the truth?'

" 'Yes, of course,' I replied. 'Where is it slow?'

" 'Whenever you come on,' he said, passing gravely on his way. 'You want the truth, and now you've got it.' "

CHAPTER XXI

ON TOUR—THE THEATRICAL SPECIAL—MOTORING AND ROADSIDE PLEASURES—DRIVING A MADMAN—HOME LIFE ON TOUR—RAIDING THE "JUNK" SHOPS—A MUSICAL AFTERNOON—BUSY LIFE OF A TRAVELLING MANAGER—MARTIN HARVEY BEHIND THE SCENES—THE ACTOR'S DRESSING-ROOM—MAKING UP AS SIDNEY CARTON—PREPARING TO RING UP—SOME INCIDENTS IN THE NIGHT'S WORK

I

If you were standing outside one of the several huge railway hotels, which form a chain of great public residences in the midland and northern cities, you might catch a glimpse of Martin Harvey and his personal associates on tour. Such a glimpse would be reasonably certain on a Sunday, the day on which theatrical people are compelled to make their weekly flights. The eighty or one hundred people associated with him make up a big travelling party on the railway, and, as the playing of an extensive repertoire on tour means much luggage, that train would be considerably lengthened by a row of heavy vans filled by tons of scenery. The "theatrical special" is a familiar sight on the railway, and as the Martin Harvey Company makes long journeys, as a rule, the train would be pulling out of the station early, and would be steaming into its destination somewhere between four and six o'clock on the Sunday evening. This weekly journey, though it might represent a considerable upheaval to the stay-at-home, is a very uneventful incident in the round of the week to a seasoned member of Mr Harvey's company—for most of the members have been with him for years, and a year's work usually means from thirty to forty of these Sunday rushes along the line.

The curious admirer would not, however, see Martin Harvey depart after completing the engagements of one week, or arrive to commence the work of the succeeding week, by haunting the railway stations. No; the certain way to catch a glimpse of the actor, wet or fine, winter or summer, would be to wait, somewhere about ten o'clock in the morning, outside one of the great railway hotels. The curious would probably see an uneventful but useful touring car drawn up at the entrance, about that time, and a party of four people, with their identity hidden by motor coats, caps, veils, shawls and rugs, quickly assembling in the waiting vehicle. In a few minutes the car would be gliding away in the direction of one of the trunk roads, and in it Martin Harvey might be seen making his exit from a city in which he is now a very familiar figure. The party would consist of the actor manager, Mrs Harvey, Miss "Bess" Harvey, and Mr J. Kurkamp, a big, boyish-looking American, whose ruling passion, when not directing the stage affairs of the company, is the driving of motor cars. Later in the day you might drop across the same party lunching, a hundred miles away, in some quiet roadside hotel, or taking a picnic tea, perhaps, in the wilds of Derbyshire, or in the heights of North Wales, or along the lonely roads that lead to the north, after one has ascended the Shap and left Carlisle behind. In the evening, in almost any city, the same car might be seen, and not now spick and span, but possibly caked with dust or coated with mud, drawing up at another link in the chain of hotels, any time between six and eleven o'clock at night.

The car has added a great convenience to the touring manager's life, and Martin Harvey is a faithful user of petrol, at every season of the year, for one very important reason. These long journeys on the road, each Sunday, practically represent the only period in the week given unreservedly to leisure and the open air. He finds the weekly flight north, south, east or west a pleasant break in the seven days, giving just the note of change that prevents a long tour from becoming monotonous.

Kurkamp, who, when not driving a car, or rehearsing a crowd, insists on telling stories, will tell you of weird incidents on the road; for so many long journeys cannot be taken in a year without here and there an eventful twist. Perhaps it is a breakdown or a narrow escape from accident; again the incident includes an extraordinary reception by the public in some out-of-the-way place—Martin Harvey's admirers have appeared on deserted moorland roads; or the unexpected may lie in meeting intimate friends along the most unlikely byways. Amongst the road stories, Mrs Harvey's weird recital of the way they made room for a stranger who demanded assistance forty miles from Edinburgh, and found they were driving a lunatic into the ancient Scottish city, is perhaps a classic. On that memorable journey, their strange guest made over property, representing millions of pounds sterling, to Kurkamp. When that part of the story is reached, the stage manager is reduced to tears—thinking of the millions that never materialised, and indeed were only figures rolled out, trippingly, by a madman's tongue.

Few people know their country better than Martin Harvey and the members of the family circle who travel with him, for every week provides a compulsory lesson in topography. Always on the road, each Sunday, they have covered the ground over and over again, from London to Glasgow, Aberdeen to Bristol, or from Hull or Scarborough to Cardiff, Liverpool or Blackpool. A journey of six or seven hours on the road ends one week, or begins another, all the time the company is on tour. To Martin Harvey, with his keen sense of character, love of form and colour, and appreciation of the characteristic architecture which differs with the passing counties, the transfer of the weekly journey from the railway to the road is still a never-ending source of delight.

HOME LIFE ON TOUR

II

Life on tour does not vary very much from week to week for Mr and Mrs Harvey. The hotel may change; the rooms may vary slightly in size; the outlook from the windows may be picturesque or grim, but these are external variations only. The individuality of the family life is preserved even though its headquarters are changed from week to week. There are the same faces round the supper-table at about the same hour each night; studded about the room are the little intimate trifles from the home, and carried through the tour, to greet them each Sunday night. Mr Harvey's heavy portfolio of papers lies open on the usual table from the moment of arrival to the moment of departure. Mrs Harvey looks just as delightful shopping, with her Skye terriers, in Manchester as she does in Edinburgh, and quite as much at home, while she has just as many friends in one city as the other. You may see Martin Harvey take his lonely constitutional each morning—a five minutes' walk round the nearest square—at the same hour, as a preparation for the day's work. The usual bundles of letters appear about the same time. It is just as easy to examine ivories or bronzes in the "junk shops" (Kurkamp's description of premises devoted to antiquities) in one city as another.

No; the habit of moving on becomes almost automatic, and one soon ceases to be conscious of externals. The odd fact remains that the actor and his family never seem to be visitors to a strange city and never allow the weekly upheaval to break up the influence of the home circle and its individuality. The atmosphere of the permanent home goes with them, and the continuity of the mutual interests of all within the circle remains unbroken and detached from the changing life about them. The maintenance of the family tradition, its privacy and intimacy, its aloofness from the world of a busy hotel or a strange city, goes on from week to week and year to year. On the many occasions I have enjoyed the hospitality of Mr and Mrs Harvey on tour, I have never detected the influence I have always expected—the feeling of being received by travellers stopping in a strange hotel. The impression is always the same, so far as its influence goes—one has stepped into the routine of a pleasantly intimate home circle, totally oblivious of its environment.

There is the usual meeting in the morning, the subdivisions of duties or pleasures, and the separation of the various members as they go about their personal interests and pursuits. There are the usual reunions in the evening, and the jolly meal which precedes the serious work of the day. After the play, there is the same gathering at the supper-table, with the intimacy of mutual interests revealing itself as the members of the family chat over the doings of the day. At this little gathering, one forgets the hot theatre, the crowds, or the applause, and the talk is rarely immediately of "the shop." People who imagine the travelling player's life is a restless, broken, nerve-wracking existence, full of unaccustomed pleasures shared with strangers, and excitements snatched at to fill up the deadly blanks in an insecure and comfortless progress, would be surprised to see how easily and smoothly a simple, unostentatious and even home life goes on amid the cares and changes of a touring management. In it one can trace the hidden purpose of Mrs Harvey's genius as a hostess. The effect is not gained without an effort, although one only sees the result. Mrs Harvey has the tact that would create the social amenities for her family circle in the centre of the Sahara desert.

Two influences only disturb the routine of life on tour. John Kurkamp, exploring the byways, as he goes to and from the theatre, will come back to lunch wearing a broad and mysterious smile. There is the kind of suppressed excitement about him peculiar to schoolboys who have discovered apples or pioneers who have washed out gold. No one asks why, for the mood is constantly recurring. After an interval, during which Kurkamp seems to lose his excitement, the suppressed mystery is at length explained. The subject of it is "junk." The word "junk" in Kurkamp's vocabulary may mean anything from an old-iron shop with one solitary piece of treasure in it, to a huge establishment crowded with valuable bric-à-brac. Used as the stage director whispers the word, it means that he has seen something wonderful at a price low enough to be miraculous. It disturbs the peace of mind of the family for the rest of the day. " Junk " may mean furniture, an etching or a water-colour, old ivories or bronzes. Whatever it means, Martin Harvey and John Kurkamp are sure to disappear and arrive back, either elated with a precious find, or disappointed after a closer examination of the mistaken treasure. The routine can always be disturbed for a raid on the " junk " shop.

One other influence will also pleasantly change the routine. Mrs Harvey will decide to hold a musical afternoon. A musical at-home in artistic circles often means that many people come along, who sing or play indifferently, and more people appear who take tea and talk as loudly as possible with a view to drowning the noise. Mrs Harvey's musical afternoon is much more simple and a great deal more delightful. The home circle may be enlarged by one or two visitors. The usual orchestra at the theatre is always augmented by several performers, and the phrase " Martin Harvey and Company " includes a delightful harpist. John Kurkamp, who has been professionally associated with music all his life, and is a tenor of singular range and charm, will conspire for hours with the harpist and repeat many of his old operatic triumphs. Mrs Harvey's musical afternoons usually mean an hour of operatic reminiscences by John Kurkamp, with delightfully sympathetic accompaniments on the harp. The combination makes ideal chamber music, singularly restful and stimulating. Mrs Harvey's musical at-homes give much colour and warmth to the routine of life, and usually take place when the days are drab and drear and the overhanging clouds outside frown on unsmiling, northern industrial centres. I fancy Mrs Harvey prompts Kurkamp to the operatic reminiscences, on these odd days, when she is just a little homesick and is thinking of the pleasant rooms in her house near Regent's Park. No one would persuade her to admit the fact.

III

Of course, in running a tour, and presenting a repertoire as large as the one given by Martin Harvey and Company, each day brings its set of definite tasks. There are letters to be answered, consultations to attend, interviews to be given to people who must be seen. Again, matters arise out of the task of directing the work of many people. There are rehearsals to be conducted, and the oldest items in the repertoire still claim their share of rehearsals, for Martin Harvey is rarely content with anything he has done, and is always trying to improve every production in his repertoire. Then, the actor reads extensively and in unusual directions. Always, some friend or colleague is sending a book along which "might make a good play." Dramatic authors constantly send forward their plays to the actor, and they are always read and carefully considered. As a rule, modern plays produced by Martin Harvey are the works of authors known to him, and very little that is voluntarily offered proves acceptable. When a play is in preparation the routine work of the company is considerably augmented. Scenery, costumes, music, lighting are all problems which occupy the attentions of the management, while the play passes into incessant rehearsal, carried on wherever the company may happen to be. Always there is a routine of heavy work arising out of the day-to-day conduct of the company, and the demands made on Martin Harvey's time leave him but little leisure, from the moment he appears in the morning until the supper hour that marks the end of the day.

Nowadays, however, Mr Kurkamp, as stage director, relieves the actor manager of much detail work in the theatre. For instance, the company does not carry sufficient players to stage the tribunal scene in *The Only Way*, or the retainers, courtiers and other minor non-speaking players in *Hamlet.* This fact alone means rehearsal of a fresh group of supers each week—the revolutionary mob being recruited from the super class resident in the town. Mr Kurkamp has the rehearsal of these standing scenes reduced to a formula. I found him one night licking the *Hamlet* crowds—servants, retainers—into shape. No sooner had the curtain descended on *A Cigarette Maker's Romance* than the stage was cleared and a queue of supers answered to their names on a roll call. They might have been men in any walk

Frank B. O'Neill

Business Manager of the Martin Harvey Company

of life—junior clerks, warehousemen, porters—but Mr Kurkamp had drilled them into an idea of their duties within half-an-hour. I could scarcely believe the well-ordered procession could be evolved so quickly, but the scenes where the supers appeared passed off without a hitch on the following night. Rehearsals of supers are part of the regular work of the company, and it is surprising how often they occur when the repertoire is a long one and involves a frequent change of bill. Add to the routine of rehearsal, business management, in front and at the back of the house, and a heavy post bag addressed to the theatre daily, and one gleans some idea of the machinery. The business management of the enterprise is conducted by Mr Frank O'Neill, who has been with the company from its earliest days, and is as well known in the front of the house as anyone travelling the theatrical circuit through the provinces.

Whatever work is going on, however, there is one day in each week on which it would be very difficult for a stranger to see Martin Harvey. That is the day when the actor plays Hamlet. Mr Harvey has already told us of the state of mind into which he worked himself on the first night of *Hamlet* in London—how he lost control of his nervous make-up, became irritable, defiant and out of touch with the spirit of the play. Never again has this been allowed to happen. The *Hamlet* night is the event of the actor's week. The physical strain of playing Hamlet is intense, and to preserve the right mood the effort must not be allowed to exhaust the actor either physically or mentally. The day before *Hamlet* is always carefully spent, and Mrs Harvey and John Kurkamp take good care that no influence shall reach the actor likely to disturb his mind, or make any demand on his physical strength. Quiet meals, but little talk, no visitors, much time spent alone, a solitary walk, a rest and an early arrival at the theatre, foreshadow the *Hamlet* nights. How earnestly Martin Harvey strives after a richer illumination of Shakespeare's text is proved by his careful preparation for a greater effort. He approaches every task of his theatrical career with exacting care, but *Hamlet* makes a still greater demand upon his sense of responsibility and his profound respect for the actor's art. There is a palpable tension on the *Hamlet* day, and the shadow of the sable-clad Prince reacts on the whole of the family's intimate round. After the performance the atmosphere changes. The only definite break in the pleasantly genial atmosphere of the week has ended, and the even routine of life is resumed until the next presentation begins to loom, as a very real effort, on the horizon.

IV

I might close these glimpses of the actor on tour by describing a visit with him to the theatre in the evening. Again, we may choose a provincial theatre. As a rule, the stage door is not many steps from the hotel—rarely more than a few minutes' walk. A start is made soon after six o'clock, for provincial playgoers usually take their seats after seven. Martin Harvey does not like to be hurried in the theatre, and always gives himself ample time for preparation.

An actor's dressing-room is rather a novel sight to those who visit it for the first time. The character of it has changed materially of late years, in the provinces, as well as in town. The day when any dusty and draughty room would do is over. In the better-built theatres of to-day a leading actor's dressing-room is an airy apartment with ample space. It is well lit, a cheerful fire is blazing as you enter, there is hot and cold water in abundance, and every necessary comfort one could wish. The room is well ventilated, free from the odour which comes from undisturbed dust, carpeted and adequately furnished.

A new-comer feels the room instinctively to be a place of mirrors. There is usually a great mirror confronting the visitor with a full-length portrait of himself; another small mirror appears on the wide and ample dressing-table, and a hand mirror or two lie about in front of it. By the time Martin Harvey arrives, the ever-resourceful Shee, his valet, always with him, has laid out every single detail of the costume to be used and the make-up needed for the first act. We might choose a Sidney Carton night. Neatly folded on the chair would be every detail of Sidney Carton's costume as he is during his first appearance. His linen and cravat lie on the table; near it are his wig, hat and other details; the boots are on the floor near the chair. Placed in order are the necessary tubes of grease paint, powders and accessories to apply them.

A leisurely preparation follows. You leave Martin Harvey for a few minutes to chat with friend Kurkamp, who can tell you his latest story, and laugh over yours, and still watch an army of men at work setting the stage and know whether a single detail is out of place. The stage has not entirely lost the subtle atmosphere which suggests it has been part of a grim, empty theatre, but with the arrival of members of the company, the hurried but ordered movements of scene-shifters, the testing of limelights, and the preliminary sounds of the orchestra, now taking up its position before the curtain, the strange world behind the footlights is beginning to recreate its own fascinating working conditions.

When, after a few minutes, you return to the dressing-room, you find a man in process of transition. The man who entered the dressing-room, whose familiar features you know, is beginning to disappear. So far as clothes are concerned, he is already Sidney Carton. The face has also changed. There are lines round the mouth, hollows in the cheeks, shadows underneath the projecting brow. The wig goes into position and, with a deft joining of its edge on to the forehead, Sidney Carton is complete. There is yet time for many little touches of detail. Sidney Carton's little careless mannerisms of dress need reproducing ; trivial details, but necessary if the character of the man is to be visualised.

A final look and the actor mentally decides the preparation is right. He will chat with you, beginning where the conversation left off at the entrance to the theatre, but you have a vague idea that the man has changed. And indeed he has. Martin Harvey begins to feel his oft-repeated part. Automatically, tricks of gesture belonging to Sidney Carton, avoided by Martin Harvey, begin to appear; the voice changes subtly, as if it were unconsciously returning to Sidney Carton's throaty, guttural notes; the very carriage of the body begins to blend with the definite impression radiated by the costume. A boy knocks at the door and calls a message. The scene is set for Sidney Carton's first appearance, and is waiting. You leave the dressing-room with the actor. As you do so, you note the dresser is already setting about collecting every item in the next change and reducing the actor's table to order.

As you travel the dim-lit corridors, Mrs Harvey joins you. She is Mimi once again, but Mimi has a few minutes left before her cue is reached. You grope your way into a strange dark world. Circles of light cast by powerful reflectors, and great shadows are the first powerful impressions of a peep behind. Then odd contrasts strike you. There are many people standing at attention—Kurkamp, a shadow with a light patch on it, the white shirt front of a blameless life; near him, two men in rough clothes and shirt sleeves; near them a man focussing a lime, the full glare of the light on his face, the rest of him in shadow; at your elbow

Mrs Harvey, as Mimi, calling your attention to a mutual friend; and, passing through the standing army of scene-shifters to the dressing-rooms, the gaily dressed gallants of the first scene.

From the theatre there comes the subdued buzz of the audience. You catch some of the glamour of the sea of faces, mounted row on row, in the darkened theatre, by hearing that strange murmur. Already the theatre has warmed up and its electric, indefinable atmosphere has stolen over the footlights and permeated the stage. A look through a chink in the scenery on to the dimly lit stage shows Sidney Carton taking his seat in the shabby chambers where he alternately carouses and works. He is casting a last look round, on the arrangement of the stage and the effect of the lights.

Kurkamp surveys the whole. "Ready," you hear his voice call. Martin Harvey sinks into the stupor of Sidney Carton's drunken slumber. "Ring up," calls the stage director. As the curtain ascends, the volume of sound from the audience increases and becomes the anticipatory whisper made by the subdued voices of hundreds of people. Mysteriously, this sound dies away to silence. Sidney Carton begins to stir in his drunken sleep. Martin Harvey has begun his evening's work. Mimi waits for her cue in the wings. John Kurkamp, whose duty has ended for five minutes, rejoins Mimi and yourself to tell you the latest odd thing that has happened and "sshs" you into silence if you show a tendency to laugh too loud.

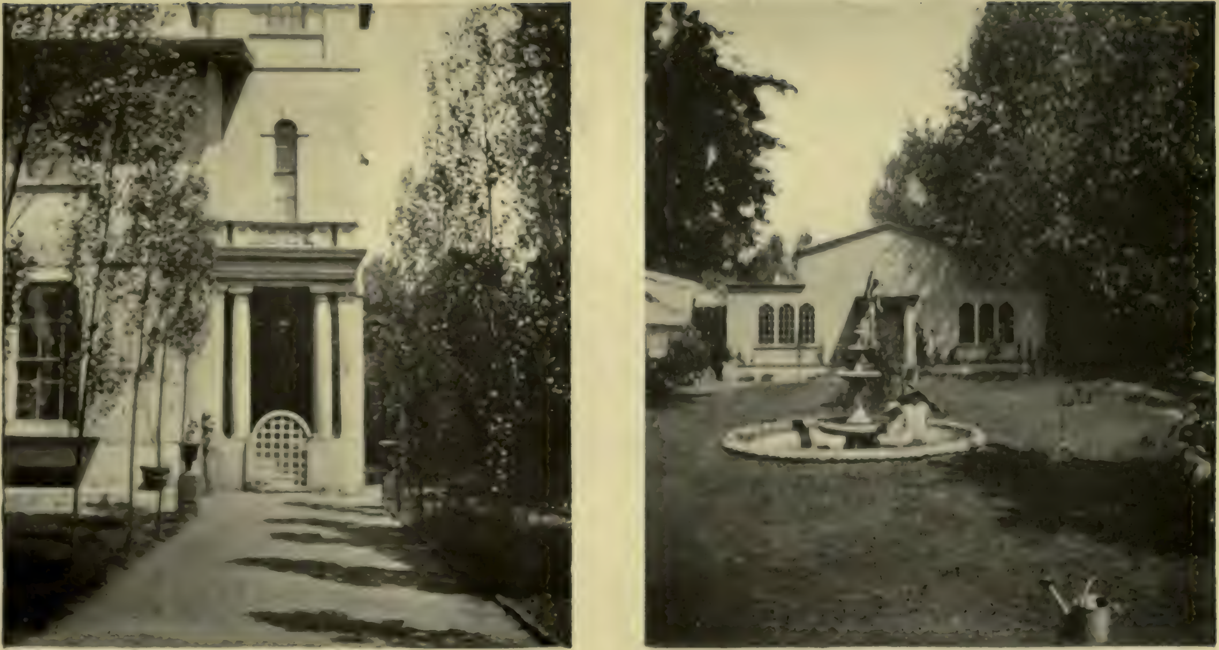
CHAPTER XXII

MARTIN HARVEY AT HOME—A PLEASANT SPOT IN AVENUE ROAD—SOME OF MRS HARVEY'S TREASURES—THE ACTOR AS COLLECTOR—RECENT ACTIVITIES—"THE WORLD AND HIS WIFE"—"THE LOWLAND WOLF"—REVIVAL OF "PELLEAS"—FIRST THOUGHTS OF "ŒDIPUS"—LAFAYETTE AND THE GERMAN PRODUCTION—THE GREEK TRAGEDY—THE CAST OF "ŒDIPUS"—MR H. W. MASSINGHAM AND THE TRAGEDIAN—HIGH PRAISE INDEED—AFTER "ŒDIPUS"

I

MARTIN HARVEY makes his home in Avenue Road, a delightful district which lies just behind Regent's Park. Here one may see the actor manager and his wife in their most congenial surroundings. Essentially fond of home, as most theatrical people are, unfortunately they have but little time to enjoy it. As a rule, the London season never lasts more than fourteen weeks; frequently, the time spent in town is less. One may say the time spent over the autumn, winter and spring tours averages something like forty weeks out of the fifty-two each year, and if a four weeks' vacation be added to this, one may get some idea of the time Mr and Mrs Harvey have at their disposal at their pleasant headquarters in Avenue Road. Probably ten weeks' residence represents the most use they make of home, with occasional flying visits when the company is not farther away than Manchester, or Leeds. Such visits, however, are very brief, for the theatre ever awaits them in the evening, and but a short interval elapses between the close of one week's engagement and the time when the actor must appear ready for the first performance, on Monday evening, in the next town and theatre in the itinerary.

The house in Avenue Road was taken after the *Don Juan* period, and has been in the occupation of the Harveys since then, the family migrating from Baker Street. It is not a large house, nor is it a small one. Georgian in type, almost hidden from the road, it forms a rather unexpected collection of rooms, which in the rear look out on to a spacious lawn. If you were shown into it, you would gather a knowledge of whether Mr and Mrs Harvey were at home by looking out on to that lawn. If the Skye terriers which accompany the actor and his wife on their travels are sunning themselves in the picturesque garden, you may take it for granted Mr and Mrs Harvey are at home. The pleasant house is open all the year round, for Miss Allen, a relative of the family, acts as chatelaine in Mrs Harvey's absence. Mr and Mrs Harvey on tour are sometimes accompanied by either their son or daughter, but to-day Miss Harvey is taking her first steps on the stage and making what many believe will be an interesting theatrical reputation, while the only son is away most of the year at school.



The Approach from Avenue Road

The Lawn, seen from the Drawing Room

MARTIN HARVEY'S HOME

With such a short period spent at home, Mr and Mrs Harvey do not entertain much when in town. An occasional dinner or garden-party is the extent of their formal entertainments, but, of course, through the house, and always welcome, troop many friends when the actor and his wife are at home. Normally, the routine of the household is very simple, and seems designed to give as much quiet home life to the occupiers as possible, between their long and exacting tours. One can almost fancy the old-fashioned house in Avenue Road is in the country, so quiet it is, and the interior is planned with a similar note of aloofness.

Apart from the sunny aspect of the house, and the almost rural surroundings, which give a pleasant air of detachment, no one could be in the spacious, restful rooms long without detecting the proclivities of the people who use them. Most of the rooms are decorated in white with raised panels or mouldings, and with the exception of the dining-room, which looks on Avenue Road, the windows look out on the pretty lawn behind, while in several cases French windows open through a vinery on to it. The drawing-room is thoroughly characteristic of Mrs Harvey. It reflects her taste for unconscious ease and comfort in the home. Apart from its treasures one notices that every chair is a comfort, and straight-backed furniture plays no part in her scheme of things. Her show-case of curiosities, gleaned through her professional life, is largely filled with relics of the theatre—handkerchiefs, rings, jewels, needlework and details of costumes associated with great players, from Grimaldi to Sir Henry Irving. Mrs Harvey is especially proud of her collection of articles used from time to time by Sir Henry Irving, which includes a beautiful pair of gloves worn in *Much Ado About Nothing*. Mrs Harvey's taste seems to run in the direction of anything associated with theatrical costume, but her love of beautiful needlework is expressed almost equally in worked fabrics used for decorative purposes in the home, or costumes such as the one worn by Pelleas in the theatre. The beauty of the costumes employed in all the productions included in Martin Harvey's repertoire is assured in a great many details by Mrs Harvey's careful research and her wonderful ability to reproduce many delightful effects achieved by the great needlewomen who plied their art in the stately mansions of the past.

Martin Harvey's love of old oak is apparent in most of the rooms, and the old-world, interior views, which one may catch by looking over the house in Avenue Road, reflect not only his taste but his success as a collector. Mr Harvey is not the man to rush into wild excesses as a collector, and no visitor will get the notion that his tastes have prompted him to make his home a show place, crowded like a museum or the galleries of some professional dealer. In collecting, his aim has been to reproduce an interior of a given period, and his purchases, covering many years, have been guided by a desire to complete the effect aimed at correctly, with fine examples of the craftsmanship he admires. Thus, in his dining-room, one finds only furniture necessary for the completion of a modest apartment, but each piece is a delight in itself, particularly desirable being the table, a set of chairs of the Elizabethan period, and a wonderfully fine example of the Court cupboard which dates back to his earlier days as a collector. In this room, too, one notes some of his choicest pictures, including a "Sidney Carton" by Harrington Mann and the first treasure he bought as a boy, which looks suspiciously like a genuine Vandyke.

Martin Harvey's room, in which most of his time is spent, is very characteristic. Along one side it contains, in a cabinet and shelves which go the length of the room, most of the books in the actor's library. In a general choice of literature he is eclectic, but one notes his taste runs largely to the greater imaginative poets and writers, past and present. The characteristic note in his library is the number of volumes concerned, directly or indirectly, with the theatre, the actor and his art, in which Irving and his reign at the Lyceum are represented by almost all that has been written on the two closely related subjects. In this same cabinet one also finds Martin Harvey's collection of bronzes, and over these he will linger for hours, if you happen to be his guest and are interested. He has hundreds of choice examples of many periods and schools, and is never happier than when examining their beauties, or pointing their interest out to his friends. If the actor may be said to have a hobby, it will be found in these cases under the well-lined bookshelves, full of the prizes he has collected on his travels, though an interest in bronzes is shared by the claims made on his admiration by a collection of old ivories equally interesting and valuable. In Martin Harvey's workroom at home, with its desk brought close up to the window, and looking on the lawn, one also finds an admirable collection of water-colours, including several examples of his own work, mostly sketches made during brief holiday tours over Europe, though some of the most interesting are to be found in a portfolio of American impressions.

One other note of interest in the actor's house is the desire to give expression to the individuality of everyone living in it. In a theatrical household the rest-rooms are important. Late hours in the theatre mean late rising and leisurely preparation for the succeeding day's round. A delightful arrangement of the rooms gives to every member of the household a separate apartment, the charm of which lies in the fact that decoration, furnishing and arrangement are left entirely to the occupier. The effect is rather an illuminating commentary on the individual tastes of the members of the family, expressed by their possessions and household gods.

Martin Harvey's home above everything is curiously intimate. It reflects the man and his catholic tastes; and Mrs Harvey's sense of home, comfort and hospitality. Although so full of much the collector would admire, it is not an exhibition, but a home, and all its treasures are used and enjoyed. The house in Avenue Road is full of light and laughter, unexpected but homely beauties and the colour and scent of flowers, while a note of welcome and pleasant hospitality radiates through the entire household.

II

Having brought my readers home from the last tour, to the house in Avenue Road, little remains to be done beyond noting Martin Harvey's activities since *The World and his Wife* was produced at Birmingham, until the winter of 1911, when another phase of the actor's art was revealed in the production of *Œdipus Rex*. *The World and his Wife* was given for six tentative matinees in the following London season at the Adelphi Theatre, the June of 1909. The cast was: Don Julian, Mr Henry Ainley; Don Severo, Mr George Cooke; Don Ernesto, Martin Harvey; Donna Mercedes, Miss Mary Rorke; and Donna Teodora, Miss N. de Silva. For this production the play was renamed *The World and his Wife*. After the London season more tours followed, until 13th April 1910, when at the Theatre Royal, Dublin, Mr Harvey presented his conception of *Richard III.*, before audiences drawn from the warm-hearted Irish city, which he loves. The tragedy was a fine presentation in five acts and eighteen scenes, beautifully staged, and, apart from the originality of the actor's conception, at every moment revealed his instinct for stage management. *Richard III.* passed into the actor's repertoire, and has drawn big audiences wherever it has been presented.

On 15th February 1911, another production, full of interest, was *The Lowland Wolf*, a strange peasant drama drawn from the Spanish of Angel Gnimera, by Wallace Gillpatrick and Guido Marburg. This drama of peasant life, with its tragic story, has been an outstanding feature of the more recent tours, and, judging from the favour shown by the audiences, will also pass into the list of standing attractions. In Manelich, the shepherd from the mountains, Mr Harvey has an entirely new part, with an extraordinary range of emotions. Those who have seen his gentle Pelleas, his studious Hamlet, or his roystering playing in *The Breed of the Treshams* have been astonished at his realisation of the elemental possibilites of the drama of peasant life. Miss N. de Silva, as Marta, in this play, is also found developing a new sense of her art, and revealing a power of emotion which is wonderfully sustained through three very difficult acts. A great attraction of *The Lowland Wolf* is the fidelity of the costumes and the very artistic reproduction of peasant life in an out-of-the-way corner of Spain, the drama being unfolded in an effective and picturesque interior which represents the entrance to a mill in Catalonia. This rugged play, which reveals Martin Harvey in a part of great virility—his Manelich is a vivid picture of peasant force and animalism—is so fresh within the memory of readers that detailed criticism need not be given here.

On Tuesday, 11th July, at the Lyceum Theatre, Maeterlinck's *Pelleas and Melisande* was again revived, with Mrs Patrick Campbell as Melisande, and since then it has been one of the great attractions of the tours, with Miss N. de Silva in the beautiful part created by Mrs Patrick Campbell. Much has been written in this volume of *Pelleas*, and the general opinion of provincial theatre-goers is that the production is the most artistically represented play that has ever been taken on tour. With the production of a one-act play by Tom Gallon, *Aurora's Captive*, at the New Theatre, Cardiff, 26th October —a play which gives Miss N. de Silva a charming comedy part, in subtly presenting a Cockney serving-girl—the record of new activities during the year 1911 comes to an end, and brings us to the production of *Œdipus* at Covent Garden.

III

The production of *Œdipus Rex*, the last of Mr Harvey's achievements on the stage, marked his advance into the front rank of tragic actors. For many years he had desired to produce the greatest of all tragedies. Mr Frank O'Neill, himself a great student of the Greek drama, had constantly pressed the interest of the tragedy on the actor manager, and the desire to produce the great classic tragedy dates back to the time when the actor and his business manager talked over the interest of the work. Indeed, only the interference of the censor some years ago discouraged Martin Harvey from attempting the tragedy in London. A version of the tragic drama was prepared, but could not be licensed at that time, and Mr Harvey's great ambition had to remain in abeyance.

Events began to shape themselves towards the production of *Œdipus* when Professor Reinhardt staged the tragedy in Berlin. The production was seen by Lafayette, the unfortunate genius whose ill-fated end in an Edinburgh theatre fire is fresh within the recollection of all. Lafayette, an intimate friend of Martin Harvey, knew the actor manager's ambition to essay the *Œdipus Rex* of Sophocles, and returned from Berlin full of enthusiasm for Max Reinhardt's stage management of the tragedy with its moving chorus. His advice was that, if Martin Harvey desired to play *Œdipus*, he should present it on the lines laid down by Reinhardt. John Kurkamp paid a hasty visit to Berlin, and returned full of the same opinion. Martin Harvey decided to produce *Œdipus* on the lines laid down by the producer at Berlin.

The production, the first night of which took place on 15th January 1912, will doubtless make pages in theatrical history. *Œdipus Rex* was performed in England for the first time since the seventeenth century. To Martin Harvey's art as a tragedian was

Œdipus Rex

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added the genius of Max Reinhardt, in what is considered his greatest effort. The arrangement of the tragedy was by one of the foremost Greek scholars of the day, Professor Gilbert Murray, with whom, for the production in England, was associated Mr W. L. Courtney.

Œdipus was a traditional subject with the poets and tragedians of Greece, but the *Œdipus Rex* of Sophocles is the only complete tragedy which survives, and was first acted about the year 425 B.C. Like *Hamlet*, and other great plays, its message is enigmatic, yet it appeals to every age. To many, *Œdipus* is a thrilling drama; others are interested in the attitude of mind both of Œdipus and Jocasta, on whose destinies Sophocles concentrated, and in the strongly defined relation of faith and reason. The audience look into two human souls. Every character in the play is a masterpiece of delineation; each is so perfectly placed, and drawn with so few unerring strokes. But it is the tragedy of *Œdipus*, passing from emotion to emotion, each one mounting to a higher note of horror, until the self-blinded King staggers from sight, that gives the tragedian the greatest of all opportunities. Let it be also said that whatever may be repugnant in the story itself is lost entirely in the extraordinary vitality and moral grandeur of the drama and in the intellectuality of the characters themselves.

Such is the tragedy Mr Harvey presented to a great first-night audience at Covent Garden. There was, of course, much interest in the attempt to realise the Greek theatre, and the open stage, with its chorus and crowds practically amongst the audience, handled with Professor Reinhardt's wonderful skill and great originality. The attempt to realise the Greek theatre and chorus and to light the theatre from the auditorium were side issues in *Œdipus*, which were, perhaps, allowed an importance they do not possess, in connection with the production of the tragedy. Professor Reinhardt's work as a producer and the wonderful effects he secures, were in the nature of iconoclastic reforms to British audiences, and as such were exceptionally interesting, although possibly they received an undue share of popular attention. Suffice it to say here, that the stern simplicity of the setting—the severe projecting stage with the massive bronze doors; the marshalling of great crowds before the audience; the lighting from the auditorium and other daring innovations to modern audiences, used to the theatre and the curtain which arbitrarily separates the traffic of the stage from the playgoers, received much interested attention, and were greatly admired.

When all was said, however, the play was the thing, and nothing could dwarf the deep interest of the tragedy and its heavy demands on the artistic quality of the players engaged. Most of the distinguished people engaged by Martin Harvey for this production won golden opinions, and, as the event was in the nature of theatrical history, the cast may be given here, as it appeared on the Covent Garden programme. It was as follows:—

THE CAST OF "ŒDIPUS"

Œdipus	Martin Harvey
Creon	Louis Calvert
Jocasta	Lillah McCarthy
Teiresias	H. A. Saintsbury
A Priest	Ernest Stidwell
Messenger from Corinth	Herbert Dansey
A Herdsman	Philip Hewland
Messenger from Palace	Franklin Dyall
Leader of the Chorus of Theban Elders	Hubert Carter

Of these players, especially distinguished were Mr Louis Calvert's Creon and Miss Lillah McCarthy's severe and tragic Jocasta; and Mr Franklin Dyall, as the Messenger, sonorous and stately, and delightful at every moment in his respectful treatment of a great theme, had no mean share of the honours of the production.

IV

Much was written of *Œdipus Rex*, and the sum total of opinion concerning the production was a tribute to Martin Harvey's personality—first as a player, and secondly as a producer. The production was certainly the most ambitious effort the actor manager has attempted in an eventful career, and it held the attention of the whole of artistic London. *Œdipus* is important as marking a definite stage in the actor's development and, looking back, it is interesting to trace the rise of the tragedian, who has quietly worked upwards from the ranks of the romantic actor, through the dreamlike Pelleas to Hamlet, the classic effort of the English school of tragedians, to a moment when, with one bold *coup*, he demanded the attention of students of the theatre by the presentation of the greatest of all Greek tragedies, offered with a very lofty conception of the atmosphere necessary to produce its great traditions. The opinion expressed was, generally, a frank recognition not only of the actor's art as a tragedian, but of his courage as a manager preoccupied with the desire to give only of his best. Out of the chorus of praise, increasing in volume as the aim of the actor manager became clearly visible, one dominant note stands out—the recognition of Martin Harvey as a great tragedian. I have purposely abstained, in this attempt to realise Martin Harvey's personality, life and aims within the arbitrary pages of a book, from quoting press opinions, because I am concerned more with the living actor as he appears in his daily habit than any attempt finally to appraise his reputation. The last may be a task for another writer and, one sincerely hopes, for another generation. I venture, however, to quote from the mass of material before me, written of Martin Harvey's Œdipus, the glowing tribute paid by Mr W. H. Massingham in the pages of *The Nation.* In doing so, I am prompted first by the fact that the recognition of the actor's art, so frankly given, is a just appreciation of great artistic triumph. A secondary consideration is that the writer, with sympathy and insight, seems to me to pierce behind the tragedy itself, and to draw aside the veil and show us an actor more than alive to his own possibilities, and singularly tenacious in the task he has set himself —which does not fall short of seeking a place amongst the line of English tragedians, winning it by the breadth of his outlook and the persistency of his purpose, and holding it, not as a mantle of temporary success, but as a record of achievement in the theatre which will live through memory until it passes into the great traditions of the stage.

"Those who witness it [Œdipus]," says *The Nation*, "will see in Mr Martin Harvey's Œdipus the noblest and most beautiful example of the tragedian's art which this generation can afford. Many will also become acquainted with what the Greeks meant by tragedy and tragic irony. They can all take an interest in Professor Reinhardt's free adaptation of the Greek theatre to the modern stage and auditorium. Finally, they will see one of the most wonderful plays ever written." After a review of the tragedy, and the manner of its production, *The Nation* goes on to say:

"But, indeed, there is no cause for the lover of great drama to do otherwise than applaud Professor Murray, Professor Reinhardt, and Mr Martin Harvey with both hands for the wonderful achievement at Covent Garden. I shall take leave to speak chiefly of one aspect of it, Mr Martin Harvey's Œdipus. Miss Lillah McCarthy's Jocasta is beautifully associated with this work of representation; but Jocasta, the hapless mother-wife, while she is one of the most affecting characters in Greek tragedy, is merely the accompaniment and complement of the supreme tragedy, which is the destruction of the peace, though not of the soul, of the King. And who is Œdipus? It is impossible not to think that Sophocles, for all his reputed orthodoxy, meant to exalt in him the spirit of man, and, like the author of 'Job,' to set against it not so much the justice as the unsearchableness of God. Did he not go further? 'All is Apollo,' wails the stricken Œdipus. That can only mean that Apollo ordained the sin—so repugnant to Greek ideas—and bade it and the suffering fall on the head of one of the noblest of men. And that, as Œdipus hints, is the work of a devil rather than a god. For Œdipus's fault hardly rises to the average Greek conception of ὕβρις; it is at worst a hot speed in temper and action. His creator is at pains to display the King's loyalty and truthfulness—his courage at that heroic pitch which risks all for the sake of full knowledge of oneself, and of unstinted reparation for all wrong that a man may unwittingly do to his brethren. But the wonderful epic of hapless Kingliness sinks into a poet's tenderest lament for the fallen, so that the spectacle of the discrowned Œdipus embracing his children, and staggering with battered, bloody face and sightless eyes through the streets of Thebes, and grovelling in their dust, an offering and an atonement, holds the affections of the spectator even more than that of the tortured 'chief of men.'

"It is Mr Harvey's art to set forth both of these conceptions with a beauty and depth of feeling, and with a power to make his face and body and voice express the most shattering experience of the heart, for many years unsurpassed on the English stage. His representation places him in the line of the great actors of the past, and in the first rank of his living contemporaries. His Œdipus is studied, but not over-studied. He has chosen its great moments with fine thought and selection. I do not believe that the modern stage yields a more thrilling effect than the freezing of Mr Harvey's face into the likeness of the Greek tragic mask as there creeps upon it his first vision of the sin which God may have meant to lay upon him. The expression is finely differentiated from a pure man's sickening repulsion at the thought of incest to a good and brave man's piteous horror at the thought of parricide. And not less beautiful, significant and intelligent is Mr Harvey's study of the fallen Œdipus. It is a greatly changed character; Mr Harvey's representation is vitally changed also. His entire achievement is the latest and most substantial fruit of the slow renaissance of the British drama from the death in life of the last two generations, and presents us again with an actor of the highest talent and the noblest zeal and truest capacity for his art."

There is no need to say more of *Œdipus* here. Mr H. W. Massingham does justice to the actor's work, for *Œdipus* was great acting—great acting of a type which has been missing from the English stage for a generation. Mr Massingham also gives value in his criticism to the underlying purpose of the actor. Through many years of patient effort in the service of his art, Martin Harvey has come with an unusual equipment. There are those who say *Œdipus* represents the limits of his possible achievements. There are others who say *Œdipus* is the first hint of the presence of an actor who has passed through the fires and come out, a finely tempered instrument. Time will prove the truth of either point of view, and certainly it is not for me to adopt the rôle of prophet. This I do know—if an equipment which comes through years of effort, perfect and well-studied health, concentration, ambition, and an increasing purpose, can take the actor further, the world of the theatre has not done with Martin Harvey, and has not yet the material to weigh him in the final balance. Certainly, I would say he has unplumbed depths and unrevealed resources of technique. To this one may add the will to do. As Irving said, "The readiness is all," and the readiness is there.

CHAPTER XXIII

A CRITICISM OF THE ACTOR'S WORK—SIDNEY CARTON AND COUNT SKARIATINE EXAMINED—NOT AN ACTOR OF ONE MOOD—PELLEAS OR HAMLET—ŒDIPUS AND THE ACTOR'S ART—CHARACTER AND THE ACTOR—A LECTURE BY MARTIN HARVEY—THE ACTOR MANAGER ON MR BIRRELL—THE DUPLICATION OF THE EGO—PROOF OF DUAL PERSONALITY—THE ACTOR MYRIAD-MINDED—IRVING PREPARING FOR "HAMLET"—CONCLUSION

I

OF Martin Harvey's art as an actor, much might be written, for it has many interesting and very fine phases. There are people who, in the earlier days, formed the idea that Martin Harvey's art was confined to the expression of himself and a certain remote and wistful vein of sadness touched at will in *The Only Way* and visible, more subtle and etherealised, in his very romantic Pelleas. But that is surely a superficial estimate of the actor's genius for the stage. A closer observer will note, after studying the whole of Martin Harvey's repertoire, that his hold on audiences does not depend upon the player being and expressing himself. The charm of Martin Harvey's work to-day lies in the variety of effects he gains with an amazing subtlety in choice of method. Martin Harvey changes the method of his acting almost as a painter changes the colours on his palette. The colours of any character are never the same, and are placed with a different method which in the end outlines a totally different character.

Take, for instance, the part of Sidney Carton, in *The Only Way*. That certainly represents the earlier method, and it comes as much from the preparatory years of study in a Dickensian atmosphere as from any deliberate use of a given side of Mr Harvey's temperamental make-up. Indeed, the method is Dickensian, and the very flavour of Dickens' work lives in the Sidney Carton presented. Nor is the subtle realisation of the Dickens' atmosphere gained either from the words of the play or from the Dickensian situations. The character is built into the part. The voice is not Martin Harvey's; but a voice studied and reproduced to fit the needs of Sidney Carton. Indeed, in the opening scenes, the painful note of alcoholism, too real to be pleasant, and the wild hint of recklessness travelling side by side with excess, is much too close to the psychology of intemperance to be a mere accidental effect created by temperament. The very notes of the voice, the droop of the body, the action of the hands, the bemused speech which precedes full comprehension, are effects reproduced after being finely observed—definite effects in a careful process of character building. Contrast the earlier phases of Sidney Carton with the later stages of his development, as he slowly frees himself from the toils of excess. Only by such contrasts does one realise the observation and the instinct at work which enable a man to build an entirely different personality on his own. Sidney Carton is not Martin Harvey ; he is Sidney Carton, a separate personality, passing through several distinct psychological changes, bodied forth by a constant alteration of the actor's method, conveyed at once by voice, facial expression, carriage and action. Sidney Carton is realised rather by the obliteration of the actor's self than by its expression.

One, however, gets a much better view of the actor's range of expression, and the variety of his methods, by contrasting one part with another. Take, for instance, Martin Harvey's Count Skariatine in *A Cigarette Maker's Romancc.* Here is a part which, chiefly through its costumes and setting, has in it something of the Dickens atmosphere, but the resemblance ends with the effect produced by the staging and costumes. There is no method of comparing Martin Harvey's Count Skariatine with his Sidney Carton. They simply differ in every detail. The beauty of the playing in *A Cigarette Maker's Romance* lies not in the dramatic situations, pleasant as they undoubtedly are, but in the delicate, elusive art by which Martin Harvey builds a picture of a delightful, simple-minded, gracious aristocrat of an almost forgotten age. The gaiety of the gentle dandy ; the gracious ease of his address ; his touching, simple faith ; his courtly standard of honour—all these are indicated and embroidered with a wealth of action, trifles light as air, which fill out the picture with the character of the period. The fidelity of the portrait lies not only in the exquisite delicacy of the spoken word, but in dozens of trivial actions—a manner of address, the use of a handkerchief, the putting on or taking off a coat, the handling of a pair of gloves. Count Skariatine is full of hundreds of subtle little touches, finely realised after an elaborate study of the period and the people. Indeed, one would say that half the charm of Count Skariatine is the delicately sustained individuality of his deportment. As Sidney Carton, Martin Harvey plays with the broad sweep Dickens loved in writing, and aims at the big effect, directly understandable. As Count Skariatine the method is finished, exquisite comedy, applied with a nicely detailed touch almost as light as thistledown.

Again, put either Count Skariatine or Sidney Carton against Pelleas. As Pelleas, the actor becomes mediæval. In Carton, during his early stages, there is animalism, ugly and repellent. In Count Skariatine, a man wholly devoid of the animal, the character is revealed, not by the force of the acting, but by its light insight. Martin Harvey's Pelleas is wholly different. He ceases to be a man : he is an idea and a beautiful symbol. Instead of likening the actor to something living, a character, one best realises him as the central note in an exquisite painting. There is something primitive in the style. Instead of visualising a character, Pelleas remains elusive, a symbol in a beautiful picture, a sound in an elaborate poem. One feels the actor's conception of Pelleas is that he shall never leave the picture and live as part of life itself. Pelleas moves through the play a mystic to the end, part of the beauty of the picture, part of the subtle meaning of the text. Then take the actor's Hamlet. Here at once Martin Harvey becomes, as every Hamlet must, the actor confronted with a Shakespeare who, whatever his ultimate aim in *Hamlet* was, undoubtedly set out to test the metal of the tragedian and his range of emotions. One might say that Shakespeare, in writing *Hamlet*, indulged his knowledge of the resources of the actor and attempted to set technical problems far above the range of the tragedian. He asks for every effect an actor of great parts can give, and asks so many times for so much of the actor's powers, that almost every great tragedian has been disappointed with his capacity to answer the call. It is useless for any actor to attempt to play Hamlet by expressing a single temperament or trusting to the display of one charming trick of style. In Martin Harvey's Hamlet one sees an actor lost to himself, and only conscious of his art, marshalling his strength and knowledge against the pitfalls Shakespeare keeps in waiting for any deficiency of technique or limitations of temperament.

And last, as an illustration, take Œdipus. Here the actor became Greek in spirit and method, and at hardly any moment of the play could one see a re-echo of anything Martin Harvey had done before.

The problem of Œdipus is to express the whole gamut of emotions in stern simplicity and without any of the adventitious aids of the modern actor. Nothing in Sidney Carton, Count Skariatine, Pelleas or Hamlet would enable Martin Harvey to play Œdipus as he did. The actor had to go back to the Greek tradition and discover, within arbitrary limitations, a new technique capable of bodying a singularly complex range of emotions. A study of Martin Harvey's repertoire, which watches the actor rather than the movements of the plays, will prove that his appeal is not a trick of temperament, or the simple use of a very beautiful voice. There is technique of a singularly flexible character, behind the last resource of the actor—the character of the man and what we vaguely call his temperament.

II

Martin Harvey himself has many times examined problems of his own art. His lecture on "Character and the Actor" is well known to many students of the theatre. In that lecture, he takes it for granted that acting is an art, and in a well-known passage explains his reasons: "I know of no definition of art which is not essentially the definition of great acting. It would be as useless to deny that in much acting there is little art, as there is little art in much painting and sculpture. Some have been found, it is true, to speak of the art of acting as a sham—Mr Augustine Birrell for instance. Well, the words 'sham' and 'imitation' are synonymous, and Mr Birrell, in his essay on Actors, in choosing the word 'sham' is doing so purposely to belittle an art, in describing which Shakespeare has, with profound sympathy and understanding, chosen the word 'imitation.'" Mr Harvey in the same lecture quotes Rodin's opinion: "People tell me I create, that is not true. God alone creates, man but reveals. My one effort is to 're-present' what I find in God's creation—above all in the form of man, which is the highest, most perfect of architectural constructions." From this quotation, Mr Harvey passes on to say: "If Rodin thinks thus highly of the re-presentation of man's body, what does he think, I wonder, of the representation of a man's soul, the province of the actor."

In a later development of the lecture, Martin Harvey attempts to answer the question implied in Hamlet's soliloquy:

> "Is it not monstrous, that this player here,
> But in a fiction, in a dream of passion,
> Could force his soul so to his own conceit,
> That, from her working, all his visage wann'd."

"How is it possible," he asks, "that an actor can 'force his soul to his own conceit' that tears will spring to his eyes, that, in other words, his physical functions will operate involuntarily and that his whole function will suit with forms to his conceit, may be even now something of a mystery. . . . May I venture to suggest that an explanation of this psychical process may be found in the discoveries of psychic research? The fact that 'man is the microcosm of the universe' seems to have received additional proof by the evidence of recent researches in hypnotic suggestion. It seems more and more clear that man is composed of many egos, if I may use the expression, and as in hypnotic suggestion the subject will answer in keeping with an identity of which in its normal condition it is unconscious, so in the exercise of his art, by an actor, one of the innumerable egos of which he is composed will live before us, in the person of the artist who has called up one of these separate identities."

Undoubtedly, there is here a sincere desire to state the mystery of the source of inspiration from which springs the actor's art. The most convincing proof of the duplication of the ego is certainly found in Martin Harvey's work. There is nothing more convincing, in this connection, than to see Martin Harvey play Pelleas, during one night, and to see him as Manelich, the Shepherd, in *The Lowland Wolf*, the following night. There is no trick of temperament in the realisation of these two parts, so opposite in every respect, side by side. Their presentation is almost proof of the existence of dual personalities, and one would say, at first sight, that it is impossible to bridge the gulf dividing them. But the two characters are played convincingly night after night. There is the subtle, poetic intangibility of Pelleas on the one night, a dream which is life reflected in an impalpable shadow, an atmosphere of beauty radiated by the artist, not to be remotely considered as a creature of flesh and blood. And the next night there is Manelich, a creature of the hill tops, a gust of elemental passion, a virile man whose emotions are of the fabric from which men have been woven from the time when humanity was first in the loom. The two characters are as separate and distinct as two milestones. The one is so elusive, so much of the realm of an imagination working round a beautiful idea ; the other is something real, of life itself, and a life as raw as it can be, confronted with the grim realities with which man has wrestled through the ages. While technique, the study of voice, expression, gesture, carriage, and the suggestion of action will do so much—and almost the most technique can do Martin Harvey does—there is something more. There is behind a brain, complex enough, intensely sympathetic, which understands life and touches it at many angles. There is the dual personality, nay, more, the personality of many separate egos. One may say, with some approach to finality, that the great actor is revealed by the number of living, separate men souls which take fire in the one central understanding. "I would venture . . . to suggest that the actor is myriad-minded," Martin Harvey says, in a memorable passage. There is truth in this, or how could one have, by day, a Martin Harvey, gentle and cultured, standing to life as clean as a blade of sterilised steel, and, at night, a Sidney Carton, hoarse with the fumes of a last debauch, or a Manelich, with a voice gusty with a passion only to be slaked in blood.

These effects are disciplined character, the substance of emotions peculiar to us all, realised and bridled, to be unleashed at will. Here are two further pictures from the lecture: "When Sir Henry Irving played Hamlet he deliberately lived the life almost of an anchorite. So solemn a charge he held his interpretation, so essential did he consider the fine poise of his spirit while being the medium of so great a creation, that throughout the run of the Shakespearean tragedy at the Lyceum Theatre he purposely refrained from indulging in any social distractions or allowing his mental equilibrium to be disturbed from a sweet serenity and a continual self-restraint.

"Here is a picture on the reverse side. An actor was to make his appearance in a rôle of not less importance than Hamlet. The night came, the theatre was only half filled, and many of the critics were so little interested that their seats were empty, or occupied only during a portion of the evening. The actor's pride was wounded, the empty seats galled him, a taint of irritability and defiance grew through his representation, he lost his self-restraint, and he failed. Not, I take it, that he did not understand his creature, but a lower side of his own nature gradually obtruded itself, and stained the fine qualities of the noble creature he was representing."

These two pictures contain the heart of Martin

Harvey's gospel as an actor. The first picture shows the actor disciplined, and the second, the actor undisciplined. There is no need to guess at the identity of the second actor. How painfully the truth of the paragraph was learnt has been told by the actor himself in an earlier chapter.

At this point, as an actor, we may leave Martin Harvey. I would like to leave him revealed as a man showing a complex personality, ever under examination and always, when a fresh facet is discovered, mounting it so that the soul behind shall shine clearly, as another character identified and revealed. I would even venture an opinion of my own, that in this region lurks the real psychology of the great artist of the stage. I think if one approached each separate character created in these latter days by Martin Harvey, and watched the actor and the expression of his purpose with a view of catching a hint of the working of his mind, that the temporary subjugation of self, and the disciplined and ordered freedom given to one of the many unsubdued inner selves present in the make-up of us all, would reveal something of the fabric on which great theatrical art is built.

III

Last, it only remains for the writer of this, to say his task is for the moment completed. The end is not written over Martin Harvey's career as an actor, and indeed there is justification for believing that the meridian is not yet reached. Mine has not been the task of forming a final estimate or placing a singularly interesting man in the niche he shall occupy when the last curtain has fallen. Rather it has been the more cheerful task of portraiture—the duty of picturing in words the character of a living man, so that many who admire the actor may see him about the day's round as he lives and works. Anyone who has fallen under the spell of Martin Harvey's magnetic personality will grant the fascination of the subject. As a writer, I may not have been entirely successful in achieving the character of the living model. That is a matter for the reader, now. I set out to follow the actor in the making, through the lean years of vague, adolescent dreams, to the period of tangible achievement. To the writer it has been a pleasant task, full of delightful moments by the way, rendered more than interesting by intimacy with several charming personalities, and lightened by their warm-hearted co-operation. If I have caught the actor faithfully, at interesting moments, and accurately presented him, there will be a measure of content after the completion of the task. If, lurking behind the mask of the actor, a man stands revealed by any efforts within these covers, I shall have no cause for regret that I adventured on a somewhat difficult undertaking. It is to my mind peculiarly satisfying, in every mood, to be convinced that behind the personality ministering to our dreams within the theatre there stands a man without.

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